

ANNUAL REPORT
OF
THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD
FOR IRELAND,

FOR THE
YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH, 1919,

BEING

THE FORTY-SEVENTH REPORT UNDER "THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD
(IRELAND) ACT, 1872," 35 & 36 VIC., c. 69.

Presented to Parliament by Command of His Majesty.



DUBLIN:
PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE.

To be purchased through any Bookseller or directly from
E. PONSONBY, LIMITED, 116, GRAFTON STREET, DUBLIN; or from
H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE, at the following addresses:—
IMPERIAL HOUSE, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C. 2, and 28, ABINGDON STREET,
LONDON, S.W. 1; 37, PETER STREET, MANCHESTER;
1, ST. ANDREW'S CRESCENT, CARDIFF; 23, FORTH STREET, EDINBURGH.

1920.

[Cmd. 578],

Price Fourpence Net.



DUBLIN CASTLE,

14th February, 1920.

SIR,

I have to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 11th instant, forwarding, for submission to His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant, the Annual Report of the Local Government Board for Ireland for the year ended 31st March, 1919.

I am,

Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

JAMES MacMAHON.

THE SECRETARY,

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,

CUSTOM HOUSE,

DUBLIN.

FORTY-SEVENTH ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD FOR IRELAND.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY JOHN DENTON PINKSTONE,
VISCOUNT FRENCH,
Lord Lieutenant-General and General Governor of Ireland.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD,
DUBLIN, 9th February, 1920.

MAY IT PLEASE YOUR EXCELLENCY,

We, the Local Government Board for Ireland, submit to Your Excellency this our Forty-seventh Annual Report, under the Statute 35 and 36 Vic., chap. 69, entitled "The Local Government Board (Ireland) Act, 1872," which deals with our proceedings, generally, during the year ended the 31st of March, 1919.

For convenience of reference, the Report is classified under the following heads :—

- I. Local Government (Ireland) Acts, Motor Car Acts, Representation of the People Act, Old Age Pension Acts, War Relief, Food Production, etc. ;
- II. Poor Relief, Medical Charities ;
- III. Public Health Acts, Tuberculosis Acts, etc. ;
- IV. Provisional Orders under the Public Health Acts, the Housing of the Working Classes Acts, and the Local Government Acts, etc. ;
- V. Labourers Acts ;
- VI. Borrowing by Local Authorities : Loans sanctioned for Housing Schemes, Public Health purposes, etc. ;
- VII. Payments from the Local Taxation Account in aid of Local rates ;
- VIII. Audit ;
- IX. Examination of Parliamentary Bills ;
- X. Deputations received ;
- XI. Departmental arrangements.

The usual appendices giving details of expenditure, as well as important orders, circulars and reports, have not been printed, but pursuant to the provisions of Section 23 (2) and (3) of the Local Government (Emergency Provisions) Act, 1916, summaries of the expenditure, etc., are given in the body of the Report. The various tabular statements have been prepared in the office, and the information contained therein is available at any time if required.

I.—LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS.

The local elections due to be held during the year under review were further postponed by the Parliament and Local Elections (No. 2) Act, 1917, referred to in our last report, and by the Parliament and Local Elections Act, 1918, which received the Royal Assent on the 30th June, 1918. This enactment suspended for a year the local elections then due to take place before the 15th day of March, 1919, thus postponing till January, 1920, the elections of aldermen and councillors in county boroughs and of urban district councillors which would otherwise have taken place within the year. In the exercise of the powers given to us we applied the provisions of the Act to the election of town commissioners throughout the country, and we also made an Order postponing the election of the Belfast City and District Water Commissioners.

The effect of the Parliament and Local Elections (No. 2) Act, 1917, was to postpone until May and June, 1919, the elections of county and rural district councillors and of guardians in urban districts. Though these months fall outside the period under review, the preparation for these elections occupied a considerable time, and when in the course of the year the local authorities were faced with the question of taking the preliminary measures necessary, they found themselves, in view of anticipated further postponement, in a state of some uncertainty as to whether or not the preparations for the 1919 elections should be proceeded with. We were repeatedly pressed for instructions on this point, and although we were unable to give an authoritative ruling, we ventured to express the opinion that it would be wise for the local authorities to defer incurring expenditure on the preparations. Our belief proved to be justified, the postponement having been authorised by further legislation.

POOR RATE COLLECTION.

The collection of the poor rate still continues satisfactory, this year having been an improvement even on previous years. In all but four of the 738 collection districts the collector lodged the full amount of the warrant by the appointed day (the 31st March). In two of these four districts the delay was due to illness of the collectors, and in the other two districts collectors were not appointed until near the end of the financial year.

The following table gives the number of districts in each county in which the collections were closed by the 28th February, and it will be seen by comparison with last year's report that while the total number (149) of these districts shows a slight falling off, as compared with 152, the total number for the previous year, there has been an increase in the number of

counties in which some at least of the collectors closed by that date :—

Antrim	...	...	29 out of	29 districts
Armagh	...	...	7	12
Cork	...	...	1	43
Donegal	...	...	4	37
Down	...	...	30	30
Fermanagh	...	...	7	12
Galway	...	...	27	37
Leitrim	...	...	1	20
Limerick	...	...	14	25
Londonderry	...	...	11	11
Mayo	...	...	6	43
Roscommon	...	...	1	31
Tipperary (S.R.)	...	...	8	12
Tyrone	...	...	1	24
Wicklow	...	...	2	19

In our report for last year we pointed out that a number of County Councils have adopted the plan of allowing poundage at a higher rate to those collectors who lodge a fixed proportion of their warrants in the earlier portion of the half-year, so that the county authorities may be in a position to meet the demands of their subordinate bodies. We are pleased to be able to report an increase in the number of counties in which this practice obtains.

We continue to watch carefully the manner in which the individual collectors discharge their duties, and when necessary we call for explanations of any failure on their part to comply with the regulations. During the year we found it necessary to remove two collectors from office by Order under Seal.

We were informed in the course of the year of the death at the age of 96 of a Collector of Poor Rate in Longford County who had over 62 years' service to his credit.

The collection of the poor rate in Urban Districts continues to be satisfactory, and in 24 districts as compared with 21 last year the collection was closed by the 28th February. A list of the 24 districts is appended :—

Armagh	Castlebar	Letterkenny
Athy	Donaghadee	Newcastle
Ballina	Dungannon	Omagh
Ballyclare	Keady	Portadown
Ballymena	Kells	Portrush
Birr	Killarney	Portstewart
Bray	Killiney and	Warrenpoint
Buncrana	Ballybrack	
Carriekmacross	Larne	

ROADS.

During the year under review the local authorities have been confronted with serious difficulties in carrying on the work of road construction and maintenance. Owing to continued restrictions on borrowing and the curtailment of Road Board grants, road improvements have had to be limited to works of necessity. Loans to a total amount of £8,154, to the County Councils of Queen's County, Westmeath, and Wicklow, and to the Urban District Council of Warrenpoint were sanctioned to defray the cost of road improvements. The loan to the Wicklow County Council was obtained from the Road Board free of interest.

The following table shows the amount of the grants from the Road Improvement Fund allotted to Irish Road Authorities by the Road Board in the course of the year :—

County Council.			Amount of Grants.
Antrim	...	...	£600
Down	...	...	£800
Westmeath	...	...	£1,250
Wicklow	...	...	£6,619
Total	...	...	£9,269

On the 21st December, 1918, however, the Road Board issued a circular letter to road authorities in Ireland, stating that a sum of £236,000 from the Road Improvement Fund was available for distribution in Ireland in grants and loans for road work, and intimating that they were prepared on certain conditions to entertain applications for advances in aid of work to be carried out during the year 1919-20. Applications, it was pointed out, should be confined to important roads, and preference should be given to those subjected to an increasing amount of heavy motor traffic. On receipt of this circular the road authorities set about preparing schemes which would qualify them for participation in the benefits of this fund; and by the end of the year several schemes were well under way.

At the same time that the local authorities found their plans for road improvement limited by the restrictions on grants and loans, the work of ordinary maintenance was rendered more difficult by the increased cost of labour and materials. The enhanced cost of road materials and the general demand for increased wages for labour have added to the monetary burden of the ratepayers, and in some districts shortage of labour has caused inconvenience. In some districts also the restrictions on the supply of explosives for quarrying and of coal for road machinery have rendered it difficult to obtain sufficient road material for the works of maintenance actually undertaken. To cover the increased cost of

maintenance it has been found necessary to make 122 Orders under the provisions of Section 27 (2) of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, extending in 102 Rural Districts comprised in twenty-five counties, the limits of expenditure fixed under that Section. Of these Orders, 102 authorised temporary, and 20 authorised permanent, extensions of the limit of expenditure. In some instances where applications were made for sanction to large permanent increases of expenditure, we felt obliged to limit our sanction to periods of three or five years. At the end of that time we trust that the present abnormal conditions will have ceased to obtain and that we shall be in a position to estimate with more confidence the amount of expenditure which will be required as the basis of permanent new limits.

The higher cost of labour and material seem to have contributed largely to discourage competition for road contracts. In many districts the competition for road contracts has steadily fallen off in recent years, and owing to the difficulties experienced by road authorities in getting tenders an increasing number of proposals have had to be placed in the hands of County Surveyors to carry into execution. For this and other reasons the method of road maintenance by direct labour under the control of the County Surveyor is steadily increasing in general favour. In the course of the year we made Orders approving of schemes formulated by the County Councils concerned for the introduction of direct labour on the roads in the Rural Districts of Clifden, Oughterard and Portumna, in County Galway, the Rural District of Ballymore in County Westmeath, and the Rural District of Cookstown in County Tyrone. In these Rural Districts formal direct labour schemes had not hitherto been in operation. The County Council of Carlow adopted direct labour for the first time in a scheme formulated and approved by us for roads in the Baltinglass No. 2 Rural District.

We also made Orders approving of new schemes prepared by the County Councils of Antrim, Cavan, Clare, Down, Kerry, King's County, Kilkenny, Leitrim, Limerick, Queen's County, Roscommon, Sligo, Waterford and Westmeath, to replace schemes which had lapsed on the expiration of the time limit fixed by statute. In the majority of the new schemes a greater mileage was included than in the schemes previously in operation in the same areas.

The military operations necessitated by the war threw a large amount of exceptionally heavy traffic on certain roads in various areas, with the result that considerable expenditure became necessary for the repair of the damage so caused. Payments towards the cost of such repairs were made during the year to certain road authorities by the Road Board and Joint Roads Committee on behalf of the various Government departments concerned.

The Kilkenny County Council made a new declaration of main roads under Section 8 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1919, which came into operation without our intervention.

During the year we confirmed Byelaws framed by the Waterford County Council under the provisions of the Public Roads (Ireland) Act, 1911, for granting annual licences for locomotives used within their County other than for agricultural purposes, and for charging a fee in respect of each licence.

WAR BONUSES TO OFFICERS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Our attention was drawn in the course of the year to the wide variations existing in the amounts of war bonuses granted to officers of local Authorities throughout the country. Many authorities adopted the scale of war bonuses authorised for permanent Civil Servants in accordance with the Awards of the Conciliation and Arbitration Board for Government Employees ; but other authorities granted amounts either much below, or considerably above that scale. We considered it right that similar terms should be given to all permanent whole-time local officers who have approximately equal salaries and emoluments, as the increases in the cost of living press with practically equal severity in all parts of the country, and we therefore issued a circular on the 20th February, 1919, showing in tabular form the Civil Service Scale of War Bonuses, so that the local authorities might be in a position to adopt it, if they so desired, and thus ensure that the grants of bonus should follow a uniform principle.

DISPOSAL OF CORPORATE PROPERTY.

No question of special interest arose in the course of the year out of the operations of local authorities under this head.

EXTENSION OF TIME FOR PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS.

SECTION 51 (7) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1898, AND SECTION 4 OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1902.

The number of applications received for extensions of time for the payment of overdue Accounts is still large and shows no tendency to decrease. A reason adduced by several applicants for failure to secure payment of their claims within the statutory time was dislocation of business owing to the absence of part of their staff on war service.

For this reason and others arising out of war conditions we treated applications under this Section with more leniency than we should have felt justified in exercising in normal times.

COUNTY SURVEYORS AND ASSISTANT COUNTY SURVEYORS

No appointment of a County Surveyor was made during the year and the vacancy in County Galway mentioned in our last report still remains unfilled, temporary arrangements having been made for carrying out the duties of the office.

A general examination of candidates desiring appointments as Assistant Surveyor was held in the month of October, 1918. Fourteen candidates presented themselves for examination, and eleven of these qualified in the prescribed subjects.

ALTERATION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREAS.

The constitution in 1917 of Howth as a town under the Towns Improvement (Ireland) Act, 1854, necessitated the making of an Order dividing the Howth district electoral division into two electoral divisions, one comprising the portion of the original electoral division within the municipal boundary of the town of Howth, and the other the remainder of the original electoral division.

We mentioned in our report for last year that steps for the constitution of the Town of Howth as an Urban Sanitary District were in progress. This matter was carried to completion during the year.

The Ballina Board of Guardians proposed to improve the local arrangements for medical relief in some of the Dispensary Districts of the Union; and to enable the contemplated changes to be carried into effect, it became necessary to issue an Order under Seal altering the boundaries of the Ballycastle and Lackan South Electoral Divisions.

MEETINGS OF PUBLIC BODIES

During the year, at the request of the public bodies concerned we made Orders in pursuance of Section 14 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1902, altering the time at which the statutory monthly meetings of the Council may be held in the Urban Districts of Bray and Kells.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) ACT, 1898.—SECTION 66.

We issued the usual certificates under this Section of the sums to be paid to us by the Corporation of Dublin and the Dublin County Council to meet payments in respect of the pensions of the staff of the former Collector General of Rates in Dublin, the total sums payable by the City and County being the same as in last year.

-EDUCATION (PROVISION OF MEALS) (IRELAND) ACTS,
1914-1917.

During the year we authorised the following additional Urban District Councils to incur expenditure from the rates on the provision of School Meals:—Athlone, Dungarvan, Ennis-corthy, Fermoy, Kells, Navan, Templemore and Tullamore. The total amount expended out of the rates by local authorities on food supplied under the Acts was £4,025:13:2 of which one-half was recouped by us out of the Parliamentary Grant.

MOTOR CARS.

Under the Expiring Laws Continuance Act of 1918, the Motor Car Act, 1903, was continued in force until the 31st December, 1919.

A Defence of the Realm Regulation, 8.DD, was made by Order in Council on the 19th July, 1918, enabling the authorities concerned to grant licences under the Motor Car Act, 1903, to male persons between the ages of 16 and 17, for the driving of certain kinds of motor cars, provided that the authority granting the licence is satisfied that the youth to whom it is granted is competent to drive such a motor car. Any licence granted under the new Regulation is limited to the driving of a motor car, other than a heavy motor car or a public service vehicle, as defined in the Regulation. We drew the attention of the licensing authorities in Ireland to the new Regulation and pointed out that the licence should be in a form showing that it was limited and that the restricted character of the licence should be indicated in the Register of Licences.

The yield of the Motor Car Licence Duties levied in Ireland during the year ended March, 1918, as notified to us by the Postmaster-General, was £28,905:2:3, while the yield for the previous year amounted to £27,719:6:9.

The usual percentage accruing to County and County Borough Councils was duly paid to their credit during the year.

GENERAL CATTLE DISEASES FUND.

In accordance with a certificate furnished by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland, showing that a sum equivalent to a rating of one farthing in the pound on the net annual value of the property in all Irish administrative counties was required for the purposes of the Diseases of Animals Acts, 1894 to 1914, we made an Order on the 18th February last assessing the amount certified on the several counties and county boroughs according to their respective valuations.

SLIGO CORPORATION ACT, 1918.

The Sligo Corporation Bill (which received the Royal Assent on 30th July, 1918—see 8 and 9 Geo. 5 ch. xxiii, and our last Annual Report Par. IX p. lxviii) was promoted in the following exceptional circumstances. In the case of the King (Nelson) v. the Corporation of Sligo, the prosecutor applied to the King's Bench for a writ of *certiorari* to quash a resolution of the 24th October, 1917, passed by the Corporation of Sligo for the making and levying and collecting of a Borough Rate of 12s. 7d. in the £. (which with the Poor Rate brought the entire rate of the Borough up to 15s. 3d.) to pay off loans and to meet expenses for the then current year, and also the demand notes issued in respect of the same, on the grounds that the rate was made without and in excess of jurisdiction. As the result of agreement between the parties the case was, on the 15th January, 1918, adjourned by the Court to give Counsel an opportunity of communicating with their clients with the view of having steps taken to amend the Sligo local Acts of 1869 and 1880. The Court also expressed the opinion that the Local Government Board should have the same power to intervene in the interest of the ratepayers, when the administration of the local authority was unsatisfactory, as they had, under the Poor Relief Acts, in the case of Boards of Guardians. The Court indicated that the Corporation should pass a resolution authorising the preparation of a Bill to bring about the relief required and to provide for the exercise by the Local Government Board of the power of intervention. When the case was called on the 28th January a consent was handed in, which had been arrived at between the parties, providing that the Conditional Order of *Certiorari* should be discharged and that the Corporation should take steps to promote the necessary Bill, a draft of which was attached to the consent.

This Bill was not opposed upon petition in either House, and some unprecedented provisions were included therein, on the ground that they embodied a local compromise for the future improvement of the municipal administration. Amongst others may be noted the Clause providing for the retirement of all the Councillors and Aldermen in January, 1919, to be followed by an election according to the principle of Proportional Representation. This Clause passed the Unopposed Bill Committee of the House of Commons actually at the time when a general Bill for the postponement of all the January Municipal elections was pending and it contained a special exception from the provisions of that measure. Rules for the election were duly framed by us under the powers conferred by the Act, based upon the Draft Rules advocated by the Proportional Representation Society in the White Paper (cd 8768) of 1918, entitled:—

“Copy of Draft Rules prescribing the method of voting

"and transferring and counting votes at any Election according to the principles of—

"I. The Single Transferable Vote; and

"II. The Alternative Vote."

The principle of the Single Transferable Vote was adopted for Sligo. Considerable changes were effected by the election in the *personnel* of the Sligo Corporation.

The rating provisions of section 2 of the Act contain considerable departures from principles hitherto recognised, and they await justification from such results as may be achieved. Section 8 enables us to dissolve the Corporation for a limited period and to appoint paid officials to perform its duties, and Section 9 places in our hands wide powers over the officers of the Borough including the power to remove from office on sufficient grounds.

REPRESENTATION OF THE PEOPLE ACT, 1918.

The first Register of Electors under the Representation of the People Act was prepared and came into force during the year. In our annual report for the year ended 31st March, 1918, we set out the changes effected by the Act both as regards franchise qualifications and procedure; the preparation of the Electors Lists was not, however, generally commenced until the beginning of the year now under review.

In some instances, difficulty was experienced by Collectors of Poor Rate in obtaining the particulars required for Form A, by reason of the forms either being destroyed or returned with incorrect particulars, it being alleged that the information was required for purposes other than registration. In such cases we pointed out that the form was intended for the assistance of local officials in the preparation of the Electors Lists, and that where the forms were not filled up, or contained incorrect particulars, the lists should be prepared from such other reliable information as could be obtained. We also intimated that where the appropriate officials were unable or unwilling to discharge their duties, fit persons should be employed to discharge such duties for the purposes of the Act, in accordance with the principle laid down in Rule 44 (5) in the First Schedule to the Act and explained in our last Annual Report.

The publication of the Electors Lists was generally effected on the 15th June, 1918. The provisions of Rules 27 and 31 in the First Schedule to the Act were, however, varied by an Order of His Majesty in Council of 4th June, 1918, allowing documents to be published by being made available for inspection by the public at the office of the district council, or at some other convenient place in a county district to which the public have access, in cases where publication could not be effected in the registration unit itself. This provision is now of general application.

An interesting point arose in connection with notices, claims and objections, the forms for which were prescribed by Order of His Majesty in Council. A case arose in which there was sent to the Registration Officer a general form of objection to which was attached an extract from the Electors Lists, the names not objected to being struck out. We intimated to the Registration Officer that, while we considered that such a form would not conform to the requirements of the Registration Rules and Orders, we were not the appropriate authority to decide the question. The point was subsequently argued before the Court of Appeal in the case of *Sinclair v. O'Kane*, where the court held that there was no authority for the particular form used, and that it was never contemplated that such an *omnibus* notice should be held good.

Owing to the difference existing between the various constituencies in the conditions of registration claims and objections it was not advisable to issue uniform instructions as regards revision or the appointment of Deputies for the purpose. We advised the consideration of claims and objections at the places where Revision Courts were formerly held, or at such other places as might be found convenient having regard to the largely increased electorate, and we particularly urged the holding of evening sittings in the Parliamentary Boroughs. Deputy Registration Officers were appointed in a few cases with the approval of His Excellency the Lord Lieutenant for the consideration of claims and objections, and we were satisfied that the appointment of such Deputies was necessary in order to effect publication of the Register within the prescribed time.

In consequence of a disturbance in the printing trade in Dublin, the printing of the registers for the Parliamentary Counties of Cork (East Riding) and Dublin, and the Parliamentary Borough of Dublin was delayed and it was not possible to publish those registers upon the day prescribed. We accordingly issued an Order under section 46 (3) of the Act, directing that the registers should be deemed to have been duly published and to have come into force on the 1st October, 1918.

Naval and Military Voters.

The provisions of the Act and Orders in Council regarding the voting arrangements for absent voters by post or by proxy made co-operation necessary up to the time of election, between the Registration and Returning Officers. In addition to the Absent Voters Lists, Registration Officers are required to keep a record of addresses of Absent Voters under Rule 19 in the First Schedule to the Act. It was arranged that two copies of the Absent Voters List should be sent to each Army Record Office, for the insertion of the latest description and address for the posting of ballot

papers of the military voters; and that the Record Office should return one of the lists to the Registration Officer on an election becoming imminent. Special arrangements were also made to secure voting facilities for men who had joined the Forces since the register was prepared, manuscript additions being made in the absent voters lists as to such voters, and the letter (a) written opposite to their names on the copy of the register used at polling stations.

Registration Officers are also required to keep a list of absent voters entitled to vote by proxy and of the persons entitled to vote as proxies.

We directed Registration Officers by circular to deliver to the Returning Officer for each constituency within their registration area two copies of the register immediately on its completion and the absent voters list when provisionally complete and to furnish the Record of Addresses, and List of Proxies as soon as an election became imminent.

It was essential that the procedure as regards the registration of and voting by naval and military voters should be uniform throughout the United Kingdom, and our instructions on the subject were issued in collaboration with the Local Government Board (Whitehall), and the War Office, Admiralty and Air Council.

Parliamentary Polling Districts and Polling Places

Schemes for the division of Parliamentary Counties into Polling Districts were submitted for confirmation. In such cases we arranged as far as possible that the Polling Districts should consist of entire District Electoral Divisions. Schemes for polling districts based upon County Electoral Divisions were framed by us, in cases of urgency, with the subsequent approval of the Councils concerned, and appear to have been satisfactory. Several orders were also made under Section 46 (3) of the Act appointing additional polling places up to the eve of the general election. As the Returning Officers' arrangements would be affected by such new polling places, we refused to issue any order except the concurrence of the Returning Officer to the scheme had been previously obtained.

Pending the issue of our General Rules, we directed publication of the newly fixed Polling Districts and Places by the County Council, without prejudice to any duty of a Returning Officer in that behalf.

Adaption of Acts.

We issued orders under seal adapting the Acts mentioned in column II of the following table in respect of the provisions in column III., in order to bring those provisions into conformity with the Representation of the People Act.

Date of Order.	Act adapted.	Sections adapted.
14th October, 1918 ...	The Belfast Water Act, 1899.	Section 53, sub-section (1), as to Register of Electors.
20th November, 1918	The Representation of the People (Ireland) Act, 1850.	Section 88, as to Questions 1 and 2, and the oath to be administered to a voter in respect of those questions.
20th November, 1918	The Ballot Act, 1872 ...	Section 2 and Rule 24 in Part I of the First Schedule as to number to be inserted on counterfoil of ballot paper.

We also issued an Order dated 17th December, 1918, containing directions as to the form of the statement to be sent by Returning Officers in Ireland to the Clerk of the Crown and Hanaper, with respect to Ballot Papers sent to Absent Voters.

Registration Expenses.

We issued forms approved by the Treasury on which claims might be made for remuneration and expenses of local officials in respect of duties under the Act, in accordance with the scales of Registration Expenses, applicable to the First Irish Register, framed by the Treasury on 17th April, 1918. The various claims were investigated and the accounts when in order were submitted to the Councils concerned for payment. Recoupment of one half of the amount so paid was made to the Council. The total cost is not yet ascertainable, as forms are still in some cases outstanding. The cost of printing, it is understood, was paid in the first instance by the Stationery Office, and a demand issued to the Council in respect of the moiety.

OLD AGE PENSIONS ACTS, 1908 AND 1911.

The following tables give particulars relating to the appeals dealt with by Us in pursuance of these Acts during the year.

1. (1) No. of appeals received from the pension Officers during the year ended 31st March, 1919 ...	4357
(2) No. of appeals received from other persons ...	325
Total ...	4682

2. (1) No. of appeals on claims decided during the year ended 31st March, 1919 ...	...	4147
(2) No. of appeals on questions decided ...	...	671
Total No. of appeals decided during the year ...		4818
3. (1) No. of claims allowed at 5s. a week ...	...	410
No. of claims allowed at less than 5s. a week ...	...	384
(2) No. of claims rejected on Age ...	1488	
Means ...	1691	
Residence ...	34	
Nationality ...	8	
Failure to work ...	nil	
Imprisonment ...	2	
Relief ...	4	
Disqualification under Order of Court ...	nil	
	3227	3227
(3) Appeals dismissed, late, etc., on claims ...	126	126
Total ...		4147
4. (1) Appeals on questions :—		
Pensions unaltered ...	...	147
Pensions raised ...	...	3
Pensions reduced ...	...	70
Pensions revoked :—		
Age ...	5	
Means ...	257	
Residence ...	1	
Nationality ...	nil	
Failure to work ...	nil	
Imprisonment ...	nil	
Relief ...	180	
Disqualification under order of Court ...	1	
Maintenance in Lunatic Asylum ...	nil	
	444	444
(2) Appeals dismissed, late, etc., on questions ...	7	7
Total ...		671

The total No. of appeals received from the passing of
the Act of 1908, up to the 31st March, 1919, was 95745
And the total No. of cases decided in the same period
was 95067

The changes made in the 'conditions affecting the grant of Additional Allowances to Old Age Pensioners by the Memorandum (C. D. 8658) issued with the Board's Circular of the 31st August, 1917, have practically obviated the necessity for appeal respecting these allowances, only two having been received by us during the past year.

WAR RELIEF.

During the first half of the year there was a considerable surplus of labour registered as unemployed, but the position on the whole compared favourably with the corresponding period of 1917. In the second half of the year a marked change took place. The signing of the Armistice and the cessation of hostilities had an immediate effect upon the labour market. War employments were practically brought to a standstill, and the dislocation which ensued was more sudden and complete than that experienced at the outbreak of the War. Unemployment grew from day to day and the general feeling of uncertainty extended quickly to all trades. The return of Irish workers from Great Britain, where several thousands had been employed at the making of munitions added considerably to the number of persons out of work. The situation was, however, quickly relieved towards the end of November, 1918, by the inauguration of the Government out-of-work donation scheme under the control and supervision of the Ministry of Labour, and the need for undertaking extended relief measures at the cost of the National Relief Fund did not arise.

In Dublin the farm colony and market gardening schemes at Fairview and Killester referred to in our last report were continued by the Local Representative Committee, who were also associated with the Central Committee on Women's Employment for Leinster, Munster and Connaught, in carrying on the schemes in force for the training of women in domestic science, in the use of power machines, in shirtmaking, and in glove and sock making. As in the previous year these measures were largely supplemented by the contract work undertaken by the Central Committee, to whom we made a further advance of £500 from the National Relief Fund to meet increased capital expenditure necessary for financing of contracts. We append extracts from a report, received from the Central Committee, bearing on the works conducted by them during the year under review.

"The Central Committee have to record a further year's work. While they are in a position to congratulate themselves again on having been able to give continuous work, it has been on a restricted basis.

"The year opened when the Committee were carrying out Shirt Contract S. 4385 for 1500 shirts weekly. This continued during the whole year, but owing to the number of shirts being rigidly confined to the allotted number, the Committee were only able to give employment to the workrooms in the City and County of Dublin; with a result that the country workrooms had to be closed down.

"In October 1918, a contract for the manufacture of 5,000 Flannel Vests was secured and carried out satisfactorily, thus giving extra work for a period of five weeks.

"The Power Machine Scheme was continued and 27 girls trained and placed in various factories in the City.

"Contract H/7990 for 43,200 pairs of "Gloves, Wollen" was completed in June and two further contracts were secured for 36,000 and 14,400 pairs of Gloves respectively. These contracts kept the girls working full time, 2,400 pairs of gloves being sent to the Royal Army Clothing Department weekly until the termination of the contracts in November, when owing to the cessation of hostilities, no further contracts were secured although the Committee made repeated efforts.

"As soon as it became clear that no further contracts were forthcoming and no capital available to run the industry on commercial lines, efforts were made to sell the Knitting Industry as a "going concern." In these efforts, however, the Committee were unsuccessful and in January, very much to their regret, they were obliged to dismiss all the machine workers and others engaged on the work, numbering in all about one hundred. The workers thus dismissed became eligible for the Out-of-Work donation. The Committee regarded this necessity as deplorable, the girls being fully trained and able to earn good wages."

The relief operations conducted by the Local Representative Committee in Dublin resulted in a charge of £3,300 upon the National Relief Fund. As regards the remaining County Boroughs the opportunities for employment continued to be satisfactory and no recourse to relief measures was necessary. In one Urban District assistance was afforded during a portion of the year to the extent of £55, while a sum of £250 was absorbed in miscellaneous grants, mostly for the relief of isolated cases in areas in which no Local Representative Committee were formed. Relief to the extent of £120 was also provided within the year to three repatriated civilians upon their release from internment in Germany at the close of hostilities, and a sum of £450 allocated for the provision of temporary assistance to demobilised men in Dublin.

The total number of persons representing heads of families or single persons relieved through Local Representative Committees from grants out of the National Relief Fund was, during the first half of the year 312, of whom 47 were men and 265 were women. and during the second half of the year 222, 46 men and 176 women. The corresponding figures for the year ended the 31st March, 1918, were, during the first half of the year, 894, (184 men and 710 women), and during the second half of the year 471, (64 men and 407 women).

*British-born wives and children of interned
Aliens and other destitute aliens.*

The arrangements for the provision of assistance through Boards of Guardians to the British-born wives and children of interned aliens and of aliens who have been repatriated or released from internment to undertake farm work, were continued as in the previous year, the relief so afforded being recouped quarterly by us to the Guardians.

During the course of the year it was found that the scale of assistance, viz, 10s. a week for the wife and 3s. a week for each dependent child was not always sufficiently elastic to meet the needs of particular households, and we obtained in September, 1918, authority from the Treasury to repay any reasonable allowance in excess of the amount fixed by scale, in cases where we were satisfied that additional relief was required.

The expenditure incurred within the year amounted to £2,888 : 9 : 9, the corresponding sum for the year ended the 31st March, 1918, being £2,748 : 13 : 0. We also recouped a sum of £256 : 5 : 10 in respect of the cost of maintenance of seven Lunatic aliens who were inmates of District Lunatic Asylums. We received no applications from Boards of Guardians for recoupment of assistance afforded to other destitute aliens.

DEPENDANTS OF SOLDIERS AND SAILORS.

The arrangements set forth in our last report in regard to the provision of the administrative expenses of Local War Pensions Committees under the Naval and Military War Pensions, Etc. (Administrative Expenses) Act, 1917, (whereby the Local Authority of the district for which a Local Committee has been established was required to provide in the first instance the administrative expenses of the Committee, as approved by us, recoupment to the extent of two-thirds of the expenses incurred, not exceeding two-thirds of the approved estimate, being subsequently made to the Local Authority through the Ministry of Pensions), were repealed by the War Pensions (Administrative Provisions) Act, 1918, which received the Royal Assent on the 21st November, 1918. In this Statute it is enacted that the administrative expenses of such Committees to an amount approved by the Minister of Pensions, instead of being defrayed in the manner provided by Section 1 of the Act of 1917, shall

be as from the 1st January, 1919, defrayed out of monies provided by Parliament. Our approval is therefore not now required to the expenditure of Local Committees upon administration, and it is no longer necessary for Local Authorities to contribute out of rates towards such expenditure.

FOOD PRODUCTION.

The allotment schemes provided by Borough and Urban District Councils under the Local Government (Allotments and Land Cultivation) (Ireland) Act 1917, were successfully carried out during 1918, and except in the case of a few districts were renewed for a further season during the Spring of 1919. Much interest continues to be taken in this form of raising food supplies and in the larger centres of population there is evidence that the allotment holders would welcome the permanent establishment of the schemes, which have been nationally serviceable and socially beneficial since their inception as a war measure in 1917.

As in the previous year some difficulty was experienced by Local Authorities in obtaining by agreement the requisite land for cultivation in allotments and it was found necessary by the Department of Agriculture and Technical Instruction for Ireland to exercise in several districts the compulsory powers vested in them by virtue of 2L of the Defence of the Realm Regulations. In continuance of the arrangement referred to in our last report the inquiries which were deemed necessary with a view of ascertaining whether the conditions laid down in the Regulations were satisfied, viz, that land was immediately required for cultivation in allotments, and that its use for that purpose was unreasonably withheld, were held locally by our Inspectors. In two instances the acreage desired for allotments was offered by agreement either previous to or during the course of the inquiries, the applications for compulsory powers being in consequence withdrawn.

The total area under cultivation in allotments at the end of March, 1919 was approximately 1950 statute acres, and the number of allotments about 17,350.

BELGIAN REFUGEES.

Owing to the cessation of hostilities during the year, the time arrived when it became possible for the Belgian Refugees in the United Kingdom to return to their own country. As soon as the Belgian ports were opened and the congestion on the railways in Belgium became somewhat eased the Repatriation Department of the English Local Government Board commenced to repatriate the refugees. Free transport was provided from the temporary homes of the refugees in the United Kingdom to whatever portion of Belgium they wished to return, and each person was allowed to carry free 300 lbs. weight of luggage.

It was arranged that the refugees in Ireland should travel in one party from Dublin by boat direct to Antwerp on the 15th February, 1919.

Ample warning had been given to the refugees to be prepared for the journey and on the evening of the 14th February refugees who lived at a great distance from Dublin and also those who were old or infirm travelled to Dublin and were accommodated for the night on board the S.S. "Quilpue" which had been provided for the journey.

In all 414 refugees left Ireland on the evening of the 15th February. They arrived in Antwerp on the 22nd February, the steamer having stopped at Cardiff for two days where 500 more refugees were taken on board.

Mrs. Fowle, President of the Committee, accompanied the refugees to Cardiff and gave the head of each family a sum of money according to the needs of the family. Very many of them had already been amply provided for by the local Committees and hosts; one family having received as much as £60. Mrs. Fowle distributed amongst them about £1,000 realised by her at the Belgian Gift Shop, Nassau Street, Dublin.

These money gifts were much appreciated and were very much needed by the refugees on their arrival in Belgium, where the cost of living was enormously high as compared with the cost in Ireland. The refugees from Ireland brought with them large quantities of luggage, including in most cases the bedding and mattresses which they had been using in this country, the local Committees and hosts, the Local Government Board for Ireland and the Central Committee having presented to the refugees such of these articles as they required.

The number of refugees in Ireland on 1st April, 1918, was 527. The number repatriated at the date of the general repatriation or about that date amounted to 439, leaving only 90 refugees still remaining.

During the year seven deaths occurred amongst the refugees while the number of births recorded was four.

Most of the local Committees formed at the beginning of the war having ceased to afford financial assistance to the refugees, the cost of their maintenance fell largely on the Government Fund which was administered by the Central Committee.

The Committee desire to express their gratitude to the educational institutions throughout Ireland which afforded educational facilities to Belgian students. Good progress was made by these students, one Belgian girl having obtained the gold medal in Chemistry in the Middle Grade of the Intermediate Examinations held in 1918, whilst another student of the Univer-

sity College at Galway obtained the Degrees of B.E. and B.Sc., of the National University of Ireland.

The Committee are pleased to record their satisfaction at the continued success of their school at Dunshaughlin for the children of the refugees. Three pupils of the school were sent to London during the year to a Belgian Training College to be trained as teachers. Monsieur Schepers, principal teacher of the school was called for Military Service by the Belgian Government in the Summer, and the Committee were fortunate in being able to fill his place by another Belgian teacher, Monsieur Volkaert.

The Belgian Colony at Dunshaughlin was managed during the period under review by Monsieur Schepers, and after his recall by Monsieur Nas-de Potter. Entire satisfaction was given to the Committee in the management of the Colony.

The Reverend Father Otteviere, S.J., principal chaplain to the refugees, attended to the spiritual wants of the refugees, practically all of whom throughout Ireland he visited during the year. His intimate knowledge of the needs of the refugees was most helpful to the Committee.

During the year the refugees were severely affected by the influenza outbreaks, at one time upwards of 40 Belgians being under treatment, of whom two died.

The medical profession in Dublin and throughout Ireland attended the refugees generally free of charge, and treatment was readily afforded them in the public hospitals when necessary.

The Committee held their final meeting on 7th May, 1919, all the refugees who desired to be repatriated having returned to Belgium.

No efforts were spared by the Committee to minister to the wants of the refugees during their long years of exile, and the Committee feel satisfied that they have faithfully discharged the trust imposed on them. In no part of the United Kingdom was such kindly consideration shown in dealing with the refugees. Many acknowledgments have been received from the Belgians of their gratitude for the splendid spirit of hospitality shown them by the Irish people.

The Committee desire to take this opportunity of again expressing their thanks to the local Committees and individual hosts and to the many friends who were associated with the local Committee or the Central Committee in their work.

The following tables show the receipts and the expenditure of the Committee from the date of its appointment in September, 1914, to the date of the closing of the accounts, and particulars as to the numbers of Belgian Refugees in Ireland :-

*Statement of Receipts and Expenditure of the
Belgian Refugees Committee (Ireland).*

	Receipts.	Expenditure.
	£ s. d.	£ s. d.
September, 1914, to 31st December, 1915 ...	11,007 6 2	10,622 17 8
1st January, 1916, to 31st December, 1916 ...	10,299 8 10	10,672 16 9
1st January, 1917, to 31st December, 1917 ...	10,444 1 9	10,143 10 5
1st January, 1918, to 31st December, 1918 ...	12,509 0 1	12,033 10 10
1st January, 1919, to 7th May, 1919 ...	2,136 11 7	2,591 15 6
TOTAL ...	46,396 8 5	46,064 11 2

The accounts of the Committee to the 15th November, 1915, were audited by Messrs. Stokes Brothers and Pim, Dublin, and from that date by an Auditor appointed by the Local Government Board.

Numbers of Belgian Refugees in Ireland.

	1915.	1916.	1917.	1918.
March Quarter ...	1,450	1,079	621	531
June Quarter ...	1,516	944	572	520
September Quarter ...	1,358	811	565	507
December Quarter ...	1,217	686	543	475

Over 2,300 refugees were at one time or another in receipt of hospitality in Ireland. The number of births, deaths and marriages recorded amongst the refugees during the period of their stay in Ireland is as follows :—

Births	73
Deaths	40
Marriages	26

II.—POOR RELIEF.

Statistics of Pauperism.

The following statement, compiled from the weekly returns furnished to us by Clerks of Unions, shows the numbers in receipt of the different forms of relief on the last Saturday of March in each of the past five years:—

	1919	1918	1917	1916	1915
In Workhouses.					
Sick in workhouse hospitals and infirmaries ...	13,287	12,721	13,368	14,046	14,430
Aged and infirm in workhouses ...	5,204	7,035	8,226	8,788	9,132
Children under 15 in workhouses other than those sick in hospital	2,920	3,270	3,750	3,769	3,982
Lunatics, idiots, and epileptics other than those sick in hospital	1,359	1,720	1,884	1,934	2,021
Mothers having infant children ...	353	413	481	539	475
All other classes ...	2,627	2,383	2,743	2,520	3,103
In extern Institutions or Homes.					
In extern hospitals ...	162	249	385	303	324
In Institutions for the blind, deaf, and dumb, and idiots and imbeciles ...	901	924	602	972	968
In Trasn and Gln district schools ...	345	354	344	334	342
Children out at nurse or boarded-out ...	2,184	2,366	2,364	2,495	2,565
Children in certified schools ...	60	72	77	66	74
On Outdoor Relief (other than children boarded-out and in certified schools).					
Under Sec. 1 of Act 10 Vic., c. 31 ...	32,110	31,382	31,773	31,816	34,916
Under Sec. 7 of Act 10 Vic., c. 31, and Sec. 4 of 11 and 12 Vic., c. 37	1,183	909	7,054	983	1,033
Under Orders pursuant to Sec. 15 of the Local Govt. (L.) Act 1898.	—	—	—	—	—
Total number of persons in receipt of relief on last Saturday in March	62,701	63,711	67,622	68,864	73,508
Average daily number.					
Indoor (including those in extern institutions)	26,817	29,258	31,386	32,095	34,770
Outdoor ...	34,796	34,547	34,556	36,658	37,537
Total daily average number on Indoor and Outdoor relief ...	61,613	64,200	65,942	68,753	72,307

It will be seen from the foregoing that the steady diminution in the number in receipt of relief observable since 1910 has been well maintained during the past year. The total number of inmates of Workhouses was 1,772 fewer in March, 1919, than in March, 1918. The only class in which there was an increase was the sick, of whom there were 566 more under treatment on the 29th March, 1919, than at the corresponding date in previous years. This was no doubt due to the epidemic of influenza. The reductions in the other classes were as follows:—

Aged and Infirm	1,211
Children	350
Lunatics	361
Mothers with infants	60
Other classes	356

The number in receipt of out-door relief was 1,009 more at the end of March, 1919, than at the corresponding period in the previous year, but the average number on that form of relief for the whole year showed a decrease of 151.

The total average number in receipt of relief during the year—viz., 61,613, represented a pauperism of 1 in every 71 of the estimated population of the country, as compared with 1 in every 45 ten years ago.

Pauper Children.

As regards pauper children, 345 were, on the 29th March last, maintained in the two District Schools of Trim and Glin; 590 were located in the Poor Law Schools at Cabra and Pelletstown; 66 were in schools certified by us under the Pauper Children Acts, and 2,184 were boarded out in foster homes throughout the country. The number in workhouses has decreased from 3,270 to 2,920 since our last Report.

Lunatics, Idiots and Epileptics.

There has been a decrease in the number of this class maintained in the workhouse, of 361 as compared with the preceding year, or of 665 as compared with the year 1915. There are, however, still 1,359 of these afflicted persons maintained in Irish workhouses, besides those sick in hospital.

Deaths in Workhouses.

The total number of deaths in workhouses during the period of 52 weeks under review was 12,115, being an increase of 3,329 on the previous year. This increase was mainly due to the epidemics of influenza, the deaths under the heading of "influenza and pneumonia," showing an increase of 2,551, and "heart disease," an increase of 527.

The deaths included 7 centenarians, one of whom was stated to have been 105 years of age, another 102 years, and another 101 years.

There were 1487 deaths from tuberculosis,* as compared with 1,469 in the preceding year. The number is, however, considerably under the average for the preceding 5 years—viz., 1,664.

There was an increase of 599 in the deaths of infants and children, as follows:—

Under 1 year, an increase of .	267
1 to 5 years " "	167
5 to 15 years " "	165

The deaths from scarlatina were 2 less than in the preceding year.

The number of deaths from cancer, viz., 427, was 38 less than in previous year, and compares very favourably with the average for the preceding 5 years, which was 541.

Nursing in Workhouse Hospitals.

The nursing staffs in Workhouse Hospitals were practically of the same strength as in previous year, 289 "trained" and 244 "qualified" nurses; 366 nursing sisters (Nuns) and 170 probationer nurses.

Patients sent to Extern Hospitals.

It will be observed from the preceding table that the number of patients sent by Boards of Guardians to extern hospitals for special treatment was 87 less than in the preceding year. This reduction was no doubt due to the decision given on the 14th December, 1917, in the High Court (King's Bench Division) to the effect that guardians were only empowered by Section 7 of the Act 25 & 26 Vic., c. 83, to send inmates of the workhouse proper, qualified as being "destitute poor persons," and that they could not legally send "poor persons" who had only been admitted to the workhouse infirmary for temporary surgical or medical relief. A number of Sanitary Authorities have, however, availed of the provisions of Secs. 155-6 of the Public Health (I) Act, 1878, and have sent sick inhabitants of their districts to extern hospitals for special treatment.

District Hospital.

As mentioned in previous report the Board of Guardians of Castlecomer Union have converted their hospital into a district hospital under the provisions of Sec. 90 of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, and have transferred their duties and powers as regards the institution to a Committee of Governors. Regulations for the management of the establishment have been framed and sanctioned. This is the first instance in which a workhouse hospital has been dealt with under Sec. 90, and the guardians are to be congratulated on their success in overcoming the initial difficulties. *

Dietaries of Inmates and Rations of Officers.

Emergency arrangements were made during the war with a view to economy in food. In some Unions it became necessary temporarily to abandon the scales of dietary, inaugurated by us in 1913, owing to the difficulty of procuring certain items of food, but recently these revised dietaries are gradually being reverted to, and it is also hoped that Unions which have not hitherto adopted the new system will do so at an early date.

Amalgamation of Unions.

The North and South Dublin Unions were amalgamated into one, and named the Dublin Union. The buildings of the former North Dublin Union have been taken over by the Military.

Poor Relief (Ireland) Act, 1914, (as amended by 6 & 7 Geo. 5, Ch. 12).

In previous reports we outlined the schemes made pursuant to the above enactments for the closing of certain workhouses in whole or in part, and for placing the inmates in the Workhouses of neighbouring Unions. Arrangements have been carried into effect under the Acts for the accommodation in other Unions of the inmates of the following Workhouses:—Oldcastle, Tipperary, Antrim, Clogher, Castlecomer, Callan, Dunshaughlin, Dunfanaghy, Irvinestown, Larne, Lisburn, Ballymoney, Strabane, Ennistymon, Castletown, Athlone, Mullingar, Ballinasloe, Ballinrobe, Claremorris, Boyle, and Sligo. In some of these cases all the inmates were transferred, but, in others only the healthy classes.

Emigration.

We did not issue any consent order to authorize assisted emigration during the year.

Expenditure on Poor Relief.

The following summary, compiled from the abstracts of Union accounts, gives the main figures of interest in connection with poor law expenditure from revenue during the year ended 30th September, 1918, and the preceding year:—

	1918.	1917.
Poor Relief, other than Dispensary Medical Relief under the Medical Charities Act:—	£	£
In-maintenance	635,973	596,229
Out Relief	174,587	154,924
Salaries and rations of officers	286,864	284,179
Children boarded out	28,139	25,371
Children maintained in Trim and Glenties district schools	10,208	10,451
Expenses of district hospital	1,614	—
Cost of maintenance of paupers sent to external hospitals, asylums for the blind, &c., by Guardians	26,775	29,231
Cost of medicines in workhouses	15,786	15,875
Other expenses	161,960	161,201
Total	1,341,906	1,257,461
Expenditure under the Medical Charities Act, and other Acts administered by the Guardians	300,684	293,592
Total poor relief expenditure	1,642,590	1,551,053

It will be observed that there was an increase of £84,445 in the total poor relief expenditure during the year. The in-maintenance showed an increase of £39,744, due to the enormously

enhanced prices of commodities. The salaries and rations of officers, too, increased by the sum of £22,685.

The abnormal conditions of the times have, of course, affected the expenditure on poor relief in Ireland as in other parts of the United Kingdom.

Dispensary Medical Relief.

The following is a summary of the cases in which medical relief was afforded and of the expenditure under the Medical Charities Act, during the year under review, and the previous year, arranged under the usual headings :—

	Year ended 31st March, 1919.	Previous year.
Number of new cases attended and registered during the Year :—		
1. At Dispensaries	424,182	428,015
2. At Patients' homes	238,386	137,658
Total number of new cases	662,568	565,673
Number of Vaccinations and Re-vaccinations performed	48,307	63,945
Salaries of Dispensary Medical Officers	£ 126,618	£ 111,587
Remuneration of temporary Dispensary Medical Officers	27,247	17,624
Total payment in respect of salaries of permanent and remuneration of temporary Medical Officers.	153,865	129,211
Salaries and payments for temporary services of Compounders of Medicine	5,215	4,036
Salaries of Midwives	24,549	22,111
Cost of medicines and appliances	31,545	26,253
Expenditure from Loans under the Dispensary Houses Act, 1879	70	1,086
Other expenses	30,944	28,700
Amount of fees paid to Medical Officers under the Compulsory Vaccination Act, 1879	4,893	6,342
Total expenses of Dispensary Districts	251,081	217,739

Medical Relief Cases.

The Medical Officers' Returns showed that during the past year 424,182 cases had been attended at the Dispensaries and 238,386 at the patients' own homes. Complete statistics were not furnished in respect of one Dispensary District, and it would also appear that correct records had not been kept by some few temporary medical officers during the influenza epidemics.

The increase, however, of over 100,000 in the reported number of patients attended during the year at their homes indicates the virulence of the outbreaks of influenza that occurred in various parts of Ireland.

The details of the influenza outbreaks are given in the section of this Report relating to the public health. The widespread prevalence of the disease in the months of October and November 1918 rendered it exceedingly difficult in the affected areas to provide medical attendance for all the patients who needed treatment in their own homes. Medical Officers worked with most commendable zeal, and Guardians spared no expense in their endeavours to secure necessary extra medical assistance. The supply of Doctors, however, for temporary duty was limited, due mainly to the large number of Practitioners then serving with His Majesty's Forces, but the available resources were fully utilised. County Councils, too, set free their Tuberculosis Medical Officers for poor law work, and the Military Authorities, at our request, released for local services during the outbreak, a number of Practitioners who had just then been granted temporary commissions.

In a few Unions the Guardians, with our sanction, employed temporary district nurses to care and nurse Influenza patients.

The fees claimed by the Doctors employed temporarily during the outbreaks were generally reasonable, although usually somewhat higher than those previously current for temporary services, but we regret to report that in some half a dozen instances the fees demanded were very excessive, even making every allowance for the extent of work and the circumstances of the times, and, in consequence, we felt obliged to refuse our sanction to the payments. We were naturally very averse to taking that step, as our policy had been to sanction if possible the emergency arrangements made by the Guardians and their officers in the face of the epidemics.

The terms upon which temporary District Nurses were employed were highly extravagant and costly in a couple of the Unions.

Salaries of Medical Officers.

The total sum paid in salaries to Dispensary Medical Officers during the past financial year amounted to £126,618 as compared with £111,587 in the previous year.

Over 100 of the Boards of Guardians granted improved remuneration, either increased salaries, or else higher scales, to their Medical Officers during the twelve months. In about a fifth of the number the proposals came from Guardians who had not previously granted any increases. The scales which had been in force were reconsidered and substantially augmented in some eighty Unions. We were pleased to notice that many of the new scales contained proposals to fix £250 a year as a maximum salary that may be attained after approved good service by Medical Officers of average sized Dispensary Districts. We

sanctioned all such proposals, and would favour the adoption generally of that maximum. A higher rate (£300 a year) was urged for a few individual Medical Officers holding important Urban Districts.

Since the inception of the general movement for the betterment of the position of Medical Officers up till the end of March last, as many as 146 out of the total of 154 Boards of Guardians had granted increased salaries—either graded scales, or all round increases of fixed sums. This question of salaries has, since the end of the financial year, been settled in additional Unions, and we propose in the outstanding cases to regulate the salaries ourselves should the Guardians persist in their refusal to fall into line and grant reasonable remuneration to their Medical Officers.

Appointment of Medical Officers.

On the 26th November, 1915, we intimated to Boards of Guardians throughout the Country that from and after that date the vacancies that arose in the Poor Law Medical Service should not be filled up permanently till the termination of the War. That step was taken in order to ensure that these local appointments would remain over for competition on the return of the medical men who had volunteered for temporary service with the Army and Navy. Strong representations were addressed to us by Boards of Guardians shortly after the signing of the Armistice, urging the withdrawal of the prohibition to the making of permanent appointments, and on the 18th March last, we acceded to the representations. Elections for the Medical Officerships have since been held in the prescribed manner and permanent appointments have been made and sanctioned.

Transfers of Medical Officers to posts within their Unions.

In December 1918 a Board of Guardians submitted a proposal to us to transfer the Medical Officer of their Workhouse to a desirable Dispensary District in the Union, and to transfer the Medical Officer of an outlying Dispensary District in the Union to the post at the Workhouse. The Medical Officers concerned were anxious for the transfers and had claimed them as promotions within the Guardians' service.

We were in sympathy with the proposal, but, on consulting our Legal Adviser, he advised that the Regulations then in force did not contemplate the appointment of officers by means of transfers between Workhouses and Dispensary Districts, and that the proposal was ultra vires in the circumstances, but that a general Order to authorize transfers, and applicable to all Union Officers, could be made.

A General Order was accordingly made by Us on the 7th March last, of which the operative provisions are as follows :—

“AND WHEREAS We deem it expedient further to amend the provisions of the General Regulations and the Dispensary Rules, in respect of the mode of appointment of officers directed to be appointed thereunder :

“NOW THEREFORE We, the Local Government Board for Ireland, in pursuance of the powers aforesaid, and of all other powers hereunto enabling Us, do hereby order, direct and declare as follows, that is to say :—

“Notwithstanding anything contained in the General Regulations or in the Dispensary Rules, the Board of Guardians of any Union in Ireland may, upon the occurrence of a vacancy in any office, without any advertisement giving notice of the appointment, appoint the person to fill such office by transferring thereto, with Our consent, a permanent officer in the service of the Union ;

“Provided always that notice in writing of the proposal to make such transfer shall have been given and entered on the minutes at a meeting of the Board of Guardians one fortnight at least preceding the meeting at which the transfer is to be made, and that the Clerk to the Guardians shall within seven days after such entry have forwarded a copy of the same to each Guardian.”

Alteration of Dispensary Districts.

A Public Inquiry was held early in 1918 by one of our Medical Inspectors into an application of the Ballina Board of Guardians to alter the boundaries of certain Dispensary Districts of the Union with the view to improving the local medical relief arrangements.

The Scheme agreed upon at the Inquiry involved the alterations of the areas of two District Electoral Divisions and also of three Dispensary Districts.

Orders approving and confirming the proposals have been made by us in this case.

Midwives of Dispensary Districts.

During the past year we authorised a few further appointments of Dispensary Midwives, bringing the total to 801. Midwives are employed in 691 out of the 739 Dispensary Districts in Ireland.

The Lying-in Hospitals in Dublin make provision for skilled nursing in the Maternity cases arising amongst the poor of the North and South Dispensary Districts of the City, and in consequence Midwives are not appointed by the Guardians to act

officially in the old area of the City. Midwives and Nurses with midwifery qualifications are provided for the poor under local arrangements in some five or six Rural Dispensary Districts, mainly in Connaught, but in the remaining 40 Dispensary Districts, 30 of which are in the Counties of Antrim, Armagh, and Down, neither the Guardians nor Nursing Bodies or Societies have so far made provision for gratuitous maternity nursing; we have however, been unable to take action in these cases owing to the absence of serious complaints either as regards insufficiency or indifferent quality of the available nursing. We trust that additional appointments of Midwives will be made by the Guardians concerned in the near future, and that a qualified Midwife will be available in every Medical Officer's district for free attendance upon the maternity patients of the dispensary class.

Returns were obtained by us from Clerks of Unions showing the extent to which the Midwives throughout the country had been employed during the past year upon Midwives' tickets, (Form E 3) or on the orders of the Medical Officers. The total number of maternity patients attended at their homes by the 762 Dispensary Midwives in respect of whom particulars were furnished, was 16,509—of this number 13,372 were attended on Midwives' tickets, and 3,137 on orders from the Medical Officers—an average all round for each Midwife of 21 cases. The average, however, of some 209 Midwives was under 12, and on our communicating with these Officers respecting the fewness of their free cases, the explanations offered were:—

(1) that the labouring classes are in comfortable circumstances and reluctant to procure tickets and prefer to pay small fees, and

(2) that unqualified persons, "handy women," are employed instead of qualified midwives by a large section of the poor.

We have intimated to Midwives that under no circumstances should they accept fees, no matter how small, from poor persons entitled to free medical relief, and that they should only accept fees in non-ticket cases from persons whose circumstances admit of their paying the usual remuneration claimed by qualified midwives. We have furthermore pointed out to Midwives that they should insist upon tickets being procured and presented to them by all poor persons entitled to gratuitous medical relief, who may requisition their services.

The Midwives (Ireland) Act 1918, prohibits unqualified women from setting up in practice as Midwives. Women of this class, who had been in bona fide practice as Midwives for a year prior to the passing of the Act, are entitled, if of good character, to claim enrolment under the Central Midwives Board, but such enrolment will not have the effect of qualifying them under our Regulations for appointment as Midwives of Workhouses and Dispensary Districts.

Midwives Practising in the City of Belfast.

The Corporation of Belfast by Part VIII of their local Act of 1911, obtained powers to establish a Midwives roll for the County Borough, to grant certificates of enrolment when the circumstances justified that course, to prohibit uncertificated Midwives from practising within the City, and to exercise control and supervision over the Midwives and their practice.

This law came into operation on the 1st January, 1913, but terminated on the 1st January, 1919, pursuant to Section 23 of the Midwives (Ireland) Act, 1918. The Corporation is now the Local Authority in the County Borough, but their power to enrol Midwives has lapsed. The rights of Midwives on their roll were safeguarded in the new enactment.

We wish again to emphasize the fact that the Belfast Corporation discharged their functions under the Act of 1911 with great care and strictness and achieved very good results during the period of six years (1913—1918 inclusive), during which their Act was in force.

Drugs and Surgical Instruments and Appliances.

Owing to representations made to us by the Medical Contractors early in the year, 1918, respecting the unstable conditions of the Drug trade and the consequent objection to long term contracts, We agreed to vary the former practice and to allow the contracts to be taken for six months instead of the full twelve months as heretofore.

The usual Prescribed Lists of Medicines and Medical and Surgical Appliances were issued in March, 1918, with a revised price for each item based on the then current market quotations. The prices were still higher than in the previous year's Lists; and contracts for the half-year (April-September, 1918), based on the new lists, were entered into by the Guardians. The discount obtained averaged in the case of drugs 11.19 per cent. and in the case of surgical instruments and appliances 17.63 per cent.

The issue in the Autumn of 1918 of Prescribed Lists for the second half-year to March, 1919, inclusive, was unavoidably delayed owing to the strike in the printing trade, and it was not found possible to despatch the lists until the middle of October. The contracts were then taken by the Guardians for a period of five months (November-March), and although the prescribed prices had advanced considerably from the March figures the average discount was smaller, 8.52 per cent., for medicines and 13.15 per cent. for appliances.

One of the large wholesale firms, which had in recent years tendered for these contracts, felt unable to compete at all in 1918-1919, owing to the adverse conditions affecting cross-channel traffic.

The contracts were executed as satisfactorily as could be expected in view of the difficulties and upsets to trade, and furthermore the quality of the supplies was invariably of a high order.

The cost of the medical supplies for Dispensaries for the past year amounted to £31,545, and for Workhouse Hospitals and Infirmarys to £15,786 as compared with £26,253 and £15,875 for the preceding year, being a total increase of £5,200.

VACCINATIONS.

(1) *Number of Operations.*

The following table shows the number of successful vaccinations performed during the year by the Medical Officers of Dispensary Districts, and Workhouses, and by Dr. Montgomery at our Vaccine Institute in Dublin.

	Primary Vaccinations	Re- Vaccinations	Total Vaccinations
BY DISPENSARY MEDICAL OFFICERS,	47,587	720	48,307
BY WORKHOUSE MEDICAL OFFICERS,	205	27	232
AT THE VACCINE INSTITUTE, ...	271	11	282
TOTAL, ...	48,063	758	48,821

In our last report and also in previous reports we drew attention to the marked diminution that had taken place in recent years in the total number of primary vaccinations performed annually by Poor Law Medical Officers and at our Vaccine Institute. This falling off has been noticeable since 1911, and it was explained that the country had enjoyed for several years past a complete immunity from Small-pox, and that during the continuance of that state of affairs parents would naturally consult their own convenience and avoid as long as possible the trouble incidental to the vaccination of their children. The vast majority of Boards of Guardians administer the Vaccination Acts carefully and efficiently, but this is not universally the case, and in perhaps ten Unions, chiefly in Leinster, the defaulters are served with notices, but legal proceedings are not resorted to promptly when the notices are disregarded.

The progress of Vaccination was seriously interrupted by the outbreaks of influenza during the year, and hence the abnormal reduction in the volume of primary vaccinations. The number fell last year to 48,063 as compared with 63,854 in the previous year.

(2) *Vaccine Department.*

The supplies of glycerinated calf lymph have, as in previous years, been obtained by us under contract from Dr. Knox Denham of the National Vaccine Institute, Sandymount Green, Dublin, and the lymph has been distributed by Dr. Montgomery, Secretary of our Vaccine Department, amongst the Medical Officers of Dispensary Districts and Workhouses, as required from time to time for public vaccinations.

The following table shows the number of tubes distributed :—

Issued to Medical Officers of	Year ended the 31st March, 1919.		Previous Year	
	Tubes.		Tubes.	
Workhouses	718	...	958
Dispensary Districts	...	82,145	...	98,557

Favourable reports respecting the quality of the lymph were furnished by our Bacteriologist, Professor E. J. McWeeney ; by Dr. Montgomery, Secretary of our Vaccine Department; and also by Poor Law Medical Officers who had obtained supplies.

Dispensary Houses (Ireland) Act, 1879 (42 & 43 Vic., Cap. 25).

We sanctioned during the past financial year a proposal put before us by the New Ross Board of Guardians to acquire the owner's interest in the Dispensary at Marley.

The purchase price and incidental expense were defrayed out of the Guardians' current account. A certificate was issued in the case under Section 4 of the Act. Apart from the above transaction our general attitude remained unchanged, namely, that undertakings under the Act should be deferred until the termination of the War.

We may here add that at the end of April last we received a communication from the Under Secretary to the Lord Lieutenant informing us that the Treasury had authorized the Board of Works to resume the issue of loans for providing Dispensaries and Medical Officers' Residences. Buildings of this class are, it is needless to repeat, required urgently in various Districts throughout the country, and we trust that Boards of Guardians will avail themselves of the loan facilities now offered to supply suitable premises, wherever necessary for the proper administration of medical relief.

III—PUBLIC HEALTH, ETC., ACTS.

We have received reports from our Medical Inspectors giving details as to the general state of the sanitation and public health of their respective districts and also full particulars respecting any serious outbreaks of infectious disease which have occurred therein during the year. It would appear that the customary standard of local administration has been maintained and that with the exception of the epidemic prevalence of Influenza, the incidence of infectious disease has on the whole been below the average.

The special feature of the vital statistics of the principal Irish Town Districts in 1918 consisted in the abnormal mortality from Influenza and consequent respiratory complications which had the effect of raising the death rate from all causes in the Irish Towns to 22·3 per thousand of the estimated population, or 27 per cent., in advance of 1917. With the exception of Galway and Blackrock, all urban areas enumerated in the Registrar General's Annual Summary showed increased mortality, but the most serious instances occurred in the Northern towns of Portadown, Londonderry, and Belfast, and in the Southern towns of Kilkenny, Clonmel, and Wexford. It is noteworthy that the deaths of persons of advanced age (65 years and upwards) were less numerous than in 1917, and that the increase of infant deaths was appreciably below the average excess. The principal Epidemic Diseases were accountable for the moderate rate of 1·6 per thousand, although Whooping Cough produced a largely increased mortality. Tuberculosis, both pulmonary and of other forms, again displayed an upward tendency. The highest death-rates were registered in Dublin County Borough, 25·0 per thousand, Newry 24·1, Londonderry County Borough 23·0 and Kilkenny 22·8. For comparative purposes it may be mentioned that the death rates in the larger centres of England and Wales (Civil population) and of Scotland in 1918, were 18·2 and 16·1 per thousand respectively.

Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889.

On the 31st March, 1919, the provisions of this Act had been adopted in 162 Rural and 92 Urban Districts.

During the year there were 1,696 and 3,509 cases of infectious disease notified in Rural and Urban Districts, respectively, being a decrease of 2,300 in the total number of cases notified

in the preceding year. A summary of notifications is contained in the subjoined table.

Disease.	Rural Districts.	Urban Districts.	Total	Disease.	Rural Districts.	Urban Districts.	Total
Small-pox ..	.	.	.	Typhoid Fever	539	453	992
Cholera ..	.	.	.	Enteric Fever			
Diphtheria ..	298	542	840	Relapsing Fever	.	.	.
Membranous Croup.	8	16	24	Continued Fever	7	17	24
Erysipelas ..	53	196	249	Puerperal Fever	5	17	22
Scarlatina or Scarlet Fever.	611	954	1,565	Other Diseases to which the Act has been applied.	123	1,268	1,391
Typhus Fever ..	52	46	98	Total ..	1,696	3,509	5,205

Small-pox.

One case of Small-pox (a military patient) was reported in June 1918, from Athlone, but no spread of infection took place. It is satisfactory to record that there has been no case of death from Small-Pox during the year, nor in any year since 1908, when only one such death occurred. As regards cases treated by Medical Officers of Dispensary Districts, there were five in 1908, one in 1913, and none in the subsequent period.

Typhus Fever.

The cases of Typhus Fever notified under the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act, 1889, numbered 98 as compared with 140 in the previous year. These figures, no doubt, do not fully disclose the incidence of the disease, partly because notification of infectious disease has not been universally adopted and partly because, as investigation not infrequently shows, the initial cases in outbreaks of Typhus Fever are liable to escape recognition. At the same time we believe that the notifications for 1918/19, as the lowest hitherto recorded, mark a further stage of progress in the elimination of this formidable disorder, once so prevalent in Ireland.

No extensive outbreak of Typhus Fever came under notice except in Londonderry County Borough, where a series of 27 cases with six deaths was reported during the months of October to December, 1918. Of these cases 17 occurred in two houses. When the disease was recognised, measures were taken to carry out disinfection and to keep contacts under supervision. The source of infection was traced by the Sanitary Officers of the

County Borough to a neighbouring district of County Donegal where, as appeared from inquiries made by our Medical Inspector, Dr. Brendan MacCarthy, five members of one family had previously suffered from illness, the character of which had not been realised. The ultimate origin of the disease could not be definitely ascertained.

Enteric Fever.

There has been a markedly diminished distribution of Enteric Fever, and where outbreaks have occurred as the result of the usual causes, contaminated water supplies, infected milk, or insanitary conditions, there has been little difficulty in keeping them within moderate limits. None of the local epidemics which have come under notice have presented any special features of interest.

The increased prevalence of Enteric Fever in Belfast County Borough to which we referred in our previous report, has undergone abatement, and in the case of Dublin County Borough, the notifications of the disease for the year have fallen to 76.

Cases of Fever Treated in Dispensary Districts.

The following table shows the number of cases of Fever (other than Scarlet Fever) reported to us by Medical Officers of Dispensary Districts as having been attended by them in each of the last nine years:—

Year.	Number of cases.	Decrease compared with last preceding year.	Increase compared with last preceding year.
1911	1,039	2	—
1912	1,064	—	25
1913	785	279	—
1914	932	—	147
1915	890	42	—
1916	714	176	—
1917	854	—	140
1918	931	—	77
1919	643	288	—

On examination of these figures it will be seen that the number of fever cases in Ireland reported by Medical Officers of Dispensary Districts during the past year shows a decrease of 288 on the preceding year. There has been a remarkable diminution of fever since 1878, the year in which the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 41 and 42 Vic., cap. 52, became law, when nearly 11,000 cases were reported.

Scarlatina.

The incidence of Scarlatina has been moderate and without any noteworthy feature.

The number of cases of Scarlet Fever (578) treated by Medical Officers of Dispensary Districts in the year ended the 31st March, 1919, was 319 less than the number so treated in the previous year.

Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis.

Sporadic cases of cerebro-spinal meningitis have occurred in a few districts throughout the country, but have shown no evidence of becoming epidemic.

The Medical Officers of districts in which troops are quartered continue to give the Military Authorities prompt information of any cases of the disease occurring among the civil population.

Influenza.

The most important event of the year from a public health point of view was the occurrence of Influenza in an epidemic form, appearing in three distinct waves in June and October, 1918, and February, 1919. The earliest visitation was principally felt in Belfast and other Districts in the North, the second was very widespread, and resulted in a large number of deaths: the third was of briefer duration and of a less fatal character. It was generally noted that the infant class and the aged were least affected, and that one attack as a rule afforded immunity. The onset of the disease was usually rapid, and much of the fatal results was due to subsequent complications, especially Septic Pneumonia. In some districts the visitation of Influenza was accompanied by outbreaks of Enteritis. Sanitary Authorities and their Officers displayed praiseworthy energy in endeavouring to deal with the emergency. For the general guidance of the public we issued advice and suggestions, founded on experience of epidemics of disease, for avoiding infection, and for dealing with attacks, when developed. The epidemic occurred at a time when the medical and nursing staffs were considerably depleted as the result of the demand for professional services in connection with the War. We afforded local authorities all possible facilities for the employment of additional medical and nursing assistance, and recommended County Councils that they might set free their Tuberculosis Officers to undertake the functions of District Medical Officers, where need existed.

The question of the addition of Influenza to the list of notifiable diseases received careful consideration, but having regard to the short incubation period, the difficulties of differential diagnosis, the varied forms which the disease assumes, and its infectivity in the early stages of attack, we were not satisfied

that notification would be likely to be effective in checking the spread of infection. This view was apparently shared by the authorities controlling public health administration in other portions of the United Kingdom. We advocated, however, the extension of the Infectious Disease (Notification) Act to Septic Pneumonia and this course was adopted in a number of Districts. Further action which we took in relation to Acute Influenzal Pneumonia is detailed below. In the case of Belfast County Borough, representations were made as to desirability of limiting the risk of infection in Cinematograph Exhibitions and other places of public entertainments, and in this instance we issued Regulations, limiting the continuous duration of public performances to four hours in the case of cinematograph exhibitions, and to three hours in the case of other entertainments, requiring an interval of not less than thirty minutes between any two entertainments to which the public are admitted, and prescribing the effectual and thorough ventilation of the place of entertainment during such interval. Power was also conferred to exclude children from Cinematograph performances so long as the national schools were temporarily closed on account of the prevalence of Influenza.

The utility of protective inoculation engaged our constant attention and we closely followed any available information with regard to experiments with prophylactic vaccine treatment. The ascertained effects did not, however, seem to us to have reached the point at which a confident opinion as to the efficacy of such treatment in conferring immunity from attack could be expressed. The general result of the experience of the past epidemic may be fairly summarised by saying that in order to cope successfully with future invasions further progress in the scientific determination of the microbic causation of the disease seems essential.

Regulations for the control of Infectious Diseases.

The experience of the Influenza epidemic as well as the possible introduction of the infection of exotic diseases consequent on the demobilisation and return of troops who have been serving abroad, have led us to frame and issue general regulations with the object of securing better control over and means for treatment of certain epidemic diseases which are prevalent or threatened at the present time. The Regulations prescribe the notification of Malaria, Dysentery, Trench Fever, Acute Primary Pneumonia and Acute Influenzal Pneumonia. Pneumonia, irrespective of the pneumonia complicating influenza, is among the chief causes of death in this country, and the recent epidemic of influenza has shown the need for additional assistance in the care of this disease. The new Regulations are intended primarily to meet this need, but it is hoped that notification of

cases of pneumonia will be followed by investigation of the conditions under which it occurs and increased knowledge of its natural history.

Under existing conditions it is particularly important that public health authorities should become aware of the occurrence of any cases of malaria or dysentery at the earliest moment, so that prompt and effective action may be taken to ascertain whether in the circumstances there are any risks of the disease being spread, and, where such risks arise, to apply the appropriate precautionary measures. The disease, trench fever, has caused serious epidemics in different war areas abroad. It has been shown to be a disease the infection of which is carried by lice, and it is important that the occurrence of any case of trench fever in civil life should at once be made the occasion of special measures to limit the infection, and to secure that persons in the patient's household, and those recently in contact with him, should be effectively freed from all parasites which can convey infection. We had previously drawn the attention of all Sanitary Authorities to the danger of the transmission of infectious disease through the agency of parasitical vermin, and furnished suggestions as to the means by which the destruction of verminous parasites, their eggs and the active virus in their excreta might be carried out. Under the Regulations certain powers and duties imposed in the case of dysentery, particularly those to prevent infection being conveyed by the handling of food by "carriers" are made applicable also to enteric (typhoid and paratyphoid) fever.

Similarly the powers and duties conferred by the Regulations in relation to trench fever are extended to two other diseases, the infection of which is conveyed by lice, viz., typhus and relapsing fever.

The Regulations empower the local authority to provide medical assistance, which includes nursing, for patients who are in need of such assistance, and are suffering from pneumonia, or any of the other diseases mentioned in the Regulations.

Notification of Tuberculosis.

No addition was made during the year to the list of Districts in which Part I of the Tuberculosis Prevention (Ireland) Act, 1908, has been adopted, and which comprises 3 County Boroughs, 32 other Urban Districts, and 52 Rural Districts.

We append a summary of notifications received in the County Borough of Dublin, classified according to age and sex.

Dublin County Borough.

Notifications of Tuberculosis for Year ended 31st March, 1919.

Age Periods.	Males.	Females.	Total.
Under 5 years	4	8	12
5 years and under 10 ..	37	30	67
10 " " " 15 ..	31	59	90
15 " " " 25 ..	75	100	175
25 " " " 35 ..	80	72	152
35 " " " 45 ..	70	69	139
45 years and upwards ..	80	31	111
TOTAL ..	377	369	746

The total number of notifications recorded for the previous year in Dublin County Borough was 892.

The question of an amendment of the prescribed conditions relating to the notification of Tuberculosis has engaged our attention. Those conditions were confined to Tuberculosis of the Lung in persons habitually sleeping or working in the same room as other persons, or employed in the preparation or distribution of articles of human food intended for sale to the public. In the course of the past ten years the public mind has been largely freed of the misgivings with which it regarded the notification of Tuberculosis, and moreover the facilities for the expert diagnosis and treatment of tuberculous patients have been greatly expanded. We accordingly judged that the time had arrived for a freer use of the system of notification, and after consultation with the President of the Royal College of Physicians in Ireland, and the President of the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland, we decided to give the widest possible effect to the powers conferred by the Act, and to prescribe that notification shall apply in every case in which a person, not being at the time in receipt of institutional or other treatment under an approved scheme for the treatment of Tuberculosis, is suffering from Tuberculosis of any form at any stage at which the sputum or other infective discharge of or from such person is, in the opinion of the medical practitioner attending on such person, liable to communicate the disease to other persons.

In issuing our Regulations on the subject, we took the opportunity of urging those Councils who had not adopted Part I of the Act, now to take the necessary steps, pointing out that experience has shown that the system operates not only without hardship to the individual, but as a useful factor in sanitary administration. There are indications that this recommendation will be followed in a substantial number of districts.

*Treatment of Tuberculosis.**1. Appointment and work of Tuberculosis Officers.*

Additional appointments of Assistant Tuberculosis Officers have been made in Belfast County Borough and in County Antrim: in the latter case there has also been an expansion of the provision of Branch Dispensaries and of District Nursing services.

2. Approval of Institutions.

Under the provisions of Section 16 (1) (a) of the National Insurance Act, 1911, our approval is required to sanatoria and other institutions with which the Insurance Committees make arrangements for the reception of insured persons suffering from tuberculosis.

In expressing approval of institutions, we have stipulated that proper records of cases shall be kept, that the institutions shall be open to our inspection at any time, and that we reserve the right to withdraw our approval at any time, should circumstances arise which would warrant such a course.

Intimation of each approval is furnished to the Insurance Commissioners.

The following additions have been made to the list of approved institutions :—

Down County Infirmary, Downpatrick.—Surgical cases of Tuberculosis.

General Hospital, Queenstown.—Medical and minor surgical cases of Tuberculosis.

Kildare County Infirmary, Kildare.—Medical and surgical (non-infectious) cases of Tuberculosis.

Kilkenny Tuberculosis Institution, Kells Road, Kilkenny.—Advanced cases and cases of tuberculosis requiring observation or tuberculin injection.

North Tipperary Tuberculosis Institution, Roscrea.—Cases of Tuberculosis requiring instruction, observation or tuberculin injection and advanced cases of pulmonary tuberculosis.

Tyrone County Sanatorium, Dungannon.—Cases of Tuberculosis.

The approved Sanatoria contain accommodation for 1,282 patients. There are 70 other institutions approved for the treatment of Tuberculosis, with a total complement of 4,451 beds. This accommodation is not of course reserved exclusively for tuberculous patients, but is available for meeting the various requirements of the community for intern treatment generally.

3. Approval of Domiciliary Treatment.

Under Section 16 (1) (b) of the National Insurance Act, 1911, our approval is required to the manner in which the treatment of tuberculous insured persons (otherwise than in Sanatoria and other institutions) is undertaken by persons and local authorities. Under the arrangements explained in previous reports, we deal with individual cases according to their merits and circumstances in those Counties in which no Tuberculosis Officer has been appointed, and we have accordingly approved the manner of treatment proposed to be undertaken in connection with cases submitted by the Insurance Committees of Cork, Londonderry, Meath and Roscommon Counties, and Limerick County Borough. Where Tuberculosis Officers have taken up duty it devolves on them, under the general conditions of approval drawn up by us, to supervise the suitability of the home surroundings in which treatment is undertaken as well as the course of treatment carried out by a medical practitioner.

4. Distribution of the Sanatorium Grant.

The final instalment in respect of the establishment of the Central Tuberculosis Institute in Belfast has been issued.

The total disbursements to date amount to £59,947 1s. 4d.

5. Exchequer Grant in Aid of the Treatment of Tuberculosis.

A Grant in aid of the net cost of the treatment of Tuberculosis has been included by Parliament in the Civil Service Estimates, and is applicable to:—

- (1) Half the net expenditure, after deducting receipts from Insurance Committees or other sources, incurred by a County or County Borough Council, under a scheme of treatment approved by us, and
- (2) Half the excess expenditure of an Insurance Committee, over and above the amount of the Committee's fund available for Sanatorium Benefit, incurred in affording Sanatorium Benefit to insured persons and their dependants, and sanctioned by the County or County Borough Council and the Treasury.

The distribution of the Grant has been entrusted to us on behalf of the Treasury, and is subject to the conditions detailed in our Circular Letter of the 5th December, 1913.

The total recoupments made during the year to the 31st March, 1919, on account of approved schemes amounted to £50,022 0s. 10d., and particulars of the disbursements are shown below :—

	£	s.	d.
Armagh	1,075	10	2
Carlow	491	18	7
Cavan	689	17	10
Clare	1,403	10	11
Donegal	330	10	9
Down	575	3	10
Dublin	1,939	2	0
Fermanagh	825	16	4
Galway	762	1	9
Kerry	1,367	4	7
Kildare	557	5	3
Kilkenny	858	19	2
King's County	1,287	8	1
Leitrim	462	5	10
Limerick	305	0	0
Louth	576	7	7
Mayo	1,152	0	0
Meath	96	11	11
Monaghan	1,027	0	6
Queen's County	870	14	3
Sligo	1,449	1	7
Tipperary (N.R.)	610	0	0
Tipperary (S.R.)	888	13	4
Tyrone	2,306	17	8
Waterford	137	0	0
Westmeath	534	5	11
Wexford	540	9	0
Belfast County Borough	14,665	10	5
Dublin County Borough	11,848	13	3
Waterford County Borough	381	15	4
Cork Joint Hospital Board	5	5	0

6. Development of County Schemes.

For the most part the administration of County schemes for the treatment of Tuberculosis has proceeded on normal lines, but some progress has been made in the Counties of Down and Antrim, where the County Councils have expanded their previous arrangements into a general scheme and have entered into Agreements with the respective Insurance Committees for the treatment of insured and exempt persons recommended for Sanatorium Benefit. Renewals of similar agreements, which were originally made for short terms, have taken place in the Counties of Cavan, Clare, Dublin and Louth and in Waterford County Borough. In the case of Dublin County Borough, the Agreement with the Borough Insurance Committee lapsed for a

brief interval, but working arrangements have since been re-established. Such Agreements are operative in 23 Counties and in 3 County Boroughs, and have secured the use of 281 institutional beds for insured and exempt patients.

Fresh arrangements for the provision of residential treatment for tuberculous discharged soldiers, etc., have been notified to us as coming into operation as from the 1st January, 1919. The whole cost of treatment provided under these arrangements so far as it is not met out of Insurance Funds will be defrayed by the Exchequer. We have circulated to County Authorities a supplemental form of Agreement to meet the new conditions.

From particulars furnished to us by Tuberculosis Officers, it would appear that the total volume of treatment has been about the same as in the preceding year. The greatest amount of work is being conducted in the County Boroughs of Belfast and Dublin, but in many of the Counties the records bear testimony to the energy of the Tuberculosis Officers and to the efficiency of the arrangements which have been organised. In a few Counties it is evident from the figures of mortality from tubercular diseases that it might be possible to get in touch with a larger number of patients, and where necessary, we have drawn attention to the means by which an improvement might be effected.

Increasing interest has been shown by the various authorities engaged in treating Tuberculosis in the subject of suitable provision for advanced cases of the disease. Progress has been made with negotiations in Donegal, Kerry, Kildare and Louth, for giving effect to our suggestions, as detailed in our last report, for accommodating such cases, under approved conditions, in the Union Hospitals. It is contemplated to include privileges in regard to classification, diet, dress, outing, and visitors. It is hoped that with the gradual removal of the influence of war conditions the development of County arrangements may be resumed, and that the problem of the advanced case will primarily engage attention.

Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops.

Under the Contagious Diseases (Animals) Acts of 1878 and 1886, and the Order thereunder, Local Authorities—i.e., the District Councils of Urban and Rural Districts are empowered to make Regulations for any or all of the following purposes:—

- (a) For the registration of all persons carrying on the trade of cowkeepers, dairymen, or purveyors of milk;
- (b) For the inspection of cattle in dairies, and for prescribing and regulating the lighting, ventilation, cleansing, drainage and water supply of dairies and cowsheds in the occupation of persons following the trade of cowkeepers and dairymen;

- (c) For securing the cleanliness of milkstores, of milkshops, and of milk vessels used for containing milk for sale by such persons ;
- (d) For prescribing precautions to be taken for protecting milk against infection or contamination.

Our general regulations for the control of the milk supply are contained in the Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops (Ireland) Order of 1908, which came into operation on the 1st May, 1908. We have strongly recommended District Councils, where the dairying industry is extensively carried on, to appoint Veterinary Surgeons as Chief Inspectors to superintend the work of the ordinary Inspector. The number of districts in which Veterinary Surgeons have, up to the present, been employed for the administration of the Order is 195, while in 99 districts other inspectors have been appointed. It will thus be seen that provision for the control of the sources of the public milk supply has been made in 294 out of a total of 309 sanitary districts.

From a return which we recently obtained from the clerks of local authorities, it appears that 53,620 persons are now registered as carrying on the trade of cowkeeper, dairyman, or purveyor of milk. No doubt this number is capable of being increased, but the supervision over dairy premises, even as at present exercised, cannot fail to be attended with beneficial results to public health. The information which has reached us goes to show that the Order is steadily effecting an improvement in the conditions under which the milk supply is produced, and that its valuable provisions towards that end are being every day better recognised.

Alleged Default of Sanitary Authorities.

Section 15 of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1896, provides that, where complaint is made to us that a Sanitary Authority has made default in providing their district with a proper supply of water, or with sufficient sewers, or in enforcing any provisions of the Public Health Acts which it is their duty to enforce, we may, if satisfied after due enquiry of the alleged default, make an Order limiting a time for the performance by the Sanitary Authority of their duty in the matter of the complaint. Such Order may be enforced by writ of *mandamus*, or we may appoint a person to perform such duty at the expense of the defaulting authority.

No Default Orders were made during the year under review.

Investment of Rural Sanitary Authorities with Powers of Urban Authorities under the Public Health Acts.

Under Section 1 of the Public Health (Ireland) Act, 1896, we are enabled, on the application of the Sanitary Authority of

any rural district, or of persons rated to the extent of at least one-tenth of the net rateable value of such district, or of any contributory place therein, to declare any provision of the Public Health (Ireland) Acts in force in urban districts to be in force in such rural district or contributory place, and to invest the Rural Authority concerned with all the powers, rights, duties, capacities, liabilities and obligations of an Urban Authority under those Acts.

Particulars of the Orders made by us during the year in pursuance of this enactment are given below :—

Rural District and Place.	Date of Order.	Section of Public Health Acts, declared to be in force.
Birr No. 1, District Electoral Division of Benagh.	12th April, 1918, ...	Section 80 of Act of 1878.
South Dublin, entire Rural District.	12th July 1918, ..	Sections 36, 37, and 38 of Amendment Act, 1890.
Do.	14th February, 1919,	Section 51 (Part IV.) of Amendment Act, 1890.

Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907.

Under the Public Health Acts Amendment Act, 1907, we are empowered, upon the application of a local authority, to declare the provisions of Part II., III., IV., V., VI. and X., or any Section contained therein, to be in force in the district of such authority, or in the case of a rural district, in any contributory place. Applications have been received by us from some local authorities under this Act, and Orders have been made in the following cases :—

District.	Date of Order.	Parts or Sections Applied.
Kinniskillen Rural District.	3rd June, 1918, ...	Parts II., III. IV., V., VI. and X.
Castlereagh Rural District.	22nd November, 1918,	Section 15 in Part II.
Sligo Rural District, ...	19th December, 1918,	Part IV.
Cavan Rural District, ...	27th March, 1919. ...	Part IV.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Notification of Births Acts of 1907 and 1915.

The eight Rural District Councils of Antrim, Belfast, Castlereagh, Mullingar, North Dublin, Rathdown No 1, Rathdown No. 2 and Rathkeale have adopted the provisions of the Act of 1907,

with our consent ; and compulsory notification of birth to the Medical Officer of Health of the district within 36 hours of its occurrence is now in force in these districts as well as in all urban districts.

The schemes for Maternity and Child Welfare referred to in our last Annual Report have been continued in all but three cases and considerable progress has been made with the initiation of new schemes. Much still remains to be done, however, if an effective service for the entire country is to be conducted. During the year we obtained the sanction of the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury to important extensions of the services in respect of which State Aid might be given from the Exchequer Grant for Maternity and Child Welfare. Recoupment from the Grant may now be allowed to the extent of 50 per cent. of approved expenditure on the following services :—

(1) The salaries and expenses of Health Visitors and Nurses engaged in Maternity and Child Welfare work, as well as such expenses as may be approved by the Board for administering a scheme.

(2) The salaries and expenses of Inspectors of Midwives.

(3) The provision of a midwife or doctor for the aid in their confinement of necessitous women not being entitled to benefit under the National Insurance Acts or in receipt of assistance from the Poor Law Authority and of such drugs and other requisites as may be approved for the use of such women and their infants.

(4) Hospital treatment provided or contracted for by Local Authorities for complicated cases of confinement or complications arising after parturition, or for cases in which a woman to be confined suffers from illness or deformity, or for cases of women who, in the opinion of the Medical Officer of Health, cannot with safety be confined in their own homes, or such other provision for securing proper conditions for the confinement of necessitous women as may be approved by the Medical Officer of Health.

(5) The provision, for necessitous women not being in receipt of assistance from the Poor Law Authority, of a doctor for illness connected with pregnancy and for aid during the period of confinement for mother and child.

(6) The expense of a centre, *i.e.*, an institution providing any or all of the following activities :—medical supervision and advice for expectant and nursing mothers, and for children under five years of age, and medical treatment at the Centre for cases needing it.

(7) Arrangements for instruction in the general hygiene of maternity and childhood.

(8) Hospital treatment provided or contracted for by Local Authorities for children under five years of age found to need in-patient treatment.

(9) The cost of food provided for expectant mothers and nursing mothers and for children under five years of age, where such provision is certified by the Medical Officer of the Centre or the Medical Officer of Health to be necessary and where the case is necessitous.

(10) Expenses of Creches and Day Nurseries and of other arrangements for attending to the health of children under five years of age whose mothers go out to work.

(11) The provision of accommodation in convalescent homes for nursing mothers and for children under five years of age.

(12) The provision of homes and other arrangements for attending to the health of children of widowed, deserted, and unmarried mothers, under five years of age.

(13) Experimental work for the health of expectant and nursing mothers and infants and children under five years of age carried out by Local Authorities or Voluntary Agencies with the approval of the Board.

(14) Contributions by a Local Authority to Voluntary Institutions and Agencies approved under the scheme.

The disbursements from the Grant in respect of the year ended 31st December, 1918, amounted in all to £5,057, 3s. 5d. This includes £389 granted to two Institutions, wherein provision is made for the care and maintenance of children under five years of age of widowed, deserted, or unmarried mothers, the balance being allocated to 86 sanitary districts—44 Urban and 42 Rural—in which 73 Schemes have been carried out by 28 Urban District Councils, 5 Rural District Councils and 40 Voluntary Agencies. Ten further schemes have been approved and others are under consideration.

Medical Inspection and Treatment of School Children.

The administration of the Exchequer Grant in aid of the expense of the medical treatment of school children and services ancillary thereto, which was previously included in the vote of the Commissioners of National Education, has been transferred to us. The Grant amounts to half the outlay incurred in carrying out approved schemes, the other moiety of the cost being defrayed from local funds. The development of the system has suffered from the disadvantage that local authorities have not hitherto been in a position to apply their rates to the purpose, and consequently it has been left to voluntary and philanthropic agencies to organise arrangements for attending to the health of school children. Schemes for dental treatment have been the most usual form which such provision has taken, and in a few districts medical inspection and treatment have been organised. But the difficulty of funds, and the localisation of interest have naturally tended to confine voluntary enterprise within narrow limits.

In the past year the disbursements from the Grant have amounted to £498 7s. 10d, distributed in respect of 22 approved schemes.

Legislation has now been promoted, which will place the duty of making arrangements for the medical inspection of school children and for attending to their health and physical welfare on County and County Borough Councils, or, by agreement confirmed by us, on the Council of Urban Districts with a population of not less than 6,000. The institution of a School medical service on systematic and comprehensive lines having for its aim the prevention of disease and the removal of the causes of disease in the whole child population of school age is consequently in prospect, with the assistance of a Parliamentary Grant to meet half the expenses.

Venereal Diseases.

We pressed forward, during the period, the special measures for the prevention, etc., of Venereal Disease and, at the end of the year, four County Borough Councils and fourteen County Councils had taken or decided to take action. Schemes for the areas of these eighteen Authorities will serve a population of over 2½ millions while Schemes actually made and approved will serve over 1½ millions.

Venereal Diseases are at this time prevalent on the Continent and in Great Britain, where exceptional steps are being taken to deal with them. The dangers of a spread of infection to this country are becoming felt and it is fortunate that the special preventive measures here are developing most satisfactorily along the Eastern Coast and adjacent areas most likely to be affected. The Schemes approved will serve particularly the populations among whom the dangers are greatest.

Beyond the last-mentioned areas, County Councils, whose consents are required by Statute, have been urged to take steps but without result so far. It is hoped, however, that the experiences of the former areas will ultimately lead the latter to modify their attitude. The diseases, though prevalent and dangerous, yield readily to treatment and organised combative and preventive measures on modern lines should safeguard the population from becoming innocently infected, and may, perhaps, stamp out the evil to a great extent.

Figures are available relating to the work during the year of four Treatment Centres and four University Laboratories, engaged in pathological work. These show an undesirable prevalence of disease and particularly of Syphilis. One County Borough Treatment Centre in the first three months of its operations dealt with 133 cases of Venereal Disease. The attendance there increased from 25 in the first week to 60 in the 10th week, and made it subsequently necessary to increase the Centre's

facilities. In a County (population about 120,000) the number of cases dealt with in nine months was 40. Under the Scheme of the County Borough referred to 181 special Laboratory tests were made in the 3 months and under that of the County Council 24 in the period of 9 months. It is expected that the facilities will be more largely availed of as the public become more fully aware of their advantages.

During the year also the Ministry of Pensions, as the Authority regulating the treatment of invalided and impaired men discharged from the Forces, extended their arrangements with us in regard to special forms of treatment and, in regard to Venereal Disease, provision was made whereby when it is brought to our notice that a man discharged from the Forces is in need of treatment for Venereal Disease, we may arrange that the Medical Practitioner in charge of the case shall receive the necessary instruction and be supplied with the requisite drugs to enable him to treat the case satisfactorily. We have further agreed to provide for such cases facilities for diagnosis, including the examination of specimens of blood and other materials.

Welfare of the Blind.

In pursuance of the Government's decision to adopt measures for the benefit of the Blind, we formulated proposals on the subject and submitted to the Irish Government our Advisory Committee's reports relating to the elementary education, industrial training, employment and relief of the incapable Blind, including recommendations for immediate grants in aid, pending legislation.

The Irish Government, in reply, intimated that the Treasury were unwilling to agree to grants-in-aid until sufficient contributions could be secured from the local rates by means of further legislation enabling local authorities to contribute.

We submitted legislative proposals accordingly and again urged the provision of interim grants as required by the circumstances of the Blind in Ireland. Both these questions of legislation and grants are still under consideration.

Sale of Food and Drugs Acts.

The local authorities for the administration of the Sale of Food and Drugs Acts are the County Councils for Counties and the Corporations for Municipal Boroughs, including the six County Boroughs. Each local authority appoints a Public Analyst, subject to our approval, and also appoints, at their discretion, Food Inspectors to take samples of food and drugs for analysis. Members of the Royal Irish Constabulary act without extra remuneration as Food Inspectors in the counties and in some of the boroughs, but in the remaining boroughs the Corporations have appointed civilians as Food Inspectors.

There has been no change in the staff of Public Analysts during the past year.

We are pleased to report that the local authorities and their officials administered the Acts energetically during the past year, and appeared to realize the vital importance of the duty which devolved upon them, of safeguarding as far as lay in their power the purity of the foods sold to the public. We consider it essential, however, that local authorities should, in view of the abnormally high prices of milk, butter, and other items of human diet, proceed even more vigorously than heretofore in the enforcement of the Acts. Legal proceedings should, in our opinion, be instituted in all reported cases of food adulteration, and local authorities should refuse to consider or accept statements in regard to extenuating circumstances. Such explanations could be tendered on oath at the Petty Sessions Courts, and would be duly considered by the Magistrates when adjudicating upon the summonses.

IV. PROVISIONAL ORDERS UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH (IRELAND) ACTS, 1878 TO 1918, THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT (IRELAND) ACTS, 1898 TO 1902, AND THE HOUSING OF THE WORKING CLASSES (IRELAND) ACTS, 1890 TO 1908.

Five Provisional Orders were made during the year under these Acts, two being the Public Health Acts, and three under the Local Government Acts.

In addition eleven Orders were made, which, though not strictly Provisional Orders, may most properly be classed with them. Eight Orders made under the Special Acts (Extension of Time) Act, 1915, extended the time during which the compulsory powers conferred by Provisional Orders for taking lands, etc., might be exercised; and the other three were made under the statutory Undertakings (Temporary Increase of Charges) Act, 1918, empowering Urban Sanitary Authorities to increase the maximum charge for gas supplied by them where the financial position of the undertakings had been adversely effected by circumstances arising out of the War.

V.—LABOURERS ACTS.

Proceedings under these Acts, in so far as the promotion of new Improvement Schemes for providing cottages and plots is concerned, had again to be postponed owing to the continued necessity, consequent upon the war, of curtailing capital expenditure by local authorities. Up to the 31st March last there were 36 new Improvement Schemes lodged with us by Rural District Councils so deferred, excluding two Improvement Schemes which were abandoned, and they propose the erection of 3,230 cottages with plots of land (not exceeding a statute acre each) to be attached thereto, 663 additional half-acre plots for cottages

having already half an acre attached, and 31 other allotments. The Treasury restrictions as regards capital expenditure having been withdrawn, however, since that date and Their Lordships having also authorised the conditional resumption of the issue of loans on Land Purchase terms where cottages are urgently required, it will now be possible to take the necessary steps with the view of carrying out portions of these Improvement Schemes and also of certain other Schemes, confirmed or provisionally confirmed, which had also to be deferred for the reason mentioned.

In addition to the new Schemes already referred to, three other Improvement Schemes were lodged with us proposing the taking of lands compulsorily for the purpose of providing 174 additional allotments and 86 other allotments, the money required in each case to be obtained in the open market. It having been represented to the Board that the allotments in question were urgently required and that the Councils concerned had made all reasonable efforts to obtain the amount of land sought for by agreement, the Board directed a Local Inquiry to be held into each Scheme.

Under the provisions of Section 15 of the Labourers Act, 1883, it was incumbent on a Rural District Council who failed to make arrangements for the erection of labourers' dwellings within two years after the confirmation of the Provisional Order authorising their erection, to reconvey the lands acquired for the purpose to the person from whom they were purchased, if he so required. Owing to the exceptional conditions caused by the War and particularly the difficulty in financing Improvement Schemes, it was found impossible in many instances to carry out the necessary arrangements for the building of the cottages within the two years specified. The Labourers Act, 1918, which received the Royal Assent on 30th July, 1918, lays down however (with a proviso as to then pending legal proceedings) that the operation of the Section shall be suspended until the expiration of one year from the termination of the War.

The rents paid by the tenants during the year amounted to £143,661 leaving a balance due of £7,138, which was £701 less than that at the end of the preceding year.

During the year we authorised the Councils of 4 Rural Districts to borrow in the open market sums amounting to £8,354 in connection with the carrying out of Improvement Schemes, the loans previously sanctioned and available from public funds for the purpose having proved insufficient.

These Supplemental Loans were obtained from Banking Companies—The Treasurers of the Councils—the rate of interest charged being from 4 to 5½ per cent. per annum, and the period of repayment being usually from 10 to 15 years. No new Loan from the Land Commission was sanctioned during the year.

47,915 cottages altogether have been provided under the Labourers Acts since they first came into operation in 1883, and the number in each province is as follows :—

Ulster	...	...	9,031
Munster	...	...	19,090
Leinster	...	...	17,335
Connaught	...	...	2,459

The total amount authorised to be borrowed under the Acts is £9,096,628 of which £5,133,520 will be advanced by the Land Commission out of the fund of £6,250,000, provided by Section 16 of the Act of 1906, as amended by the Acts of 1911 and 1914.

VI.—BORROWING BY LOCAL AUTHORITIES.

Relaxation of restrictions on Borrowing.

The restrictions imposed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury on capital issues by Local Authorities which were communicated to these Authorities in our circular letter of the 4th of May, 1915, were relaxed in December, 1918, when we issued another circular stating that, in conjunction with the Treasury, we were prepared to consider applications from Local Authorities for permission to raise loans for the purpose of putting into operation schemes of public utility such as housing, water supply, sewerage, hospitals, gas and electricity, which were of urgent importance. Attention was drawn in this circular to the impossibility of providing any large sums for advances from Public Funds, and it was stated that it would not be possible for the Treasury at present to consider applications for loans from that source except in the case of the smaller Authorities for very urgent services, and then only to a very limited total amount.

Financial assistance for Housing Schemes.

The terms of the financial assistance proposed to be given to local authorities in connection with the provision of houses for the working classes in urban districts and towns in Ireland are set forth in the following circular, in which reference is also made to an architectural competition to be conducted by the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland for the purpose of securing the best designs for suitable and economical types of houses :—

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BOARD, DUBLIN,

31st March, 1919.

49M/1919.

Miscellaneous.

SIR,

1. I am directed by the Local Government Board for Ireland to inform you that His Majesty's Government have considered

the terms of financial assistance that should be given to local authorities in connection with the provisions of houses for the working classes in urban districts and towns in Ireland at the present time. The Government are desirous of securing the rapid erection of the number of houses needed to make good the existing shortage, and they believe that under the terms now proposed they will be able to rely upon the active and energetic co-operation of the local authorities as a whole.

2. The housing schemes of local authorities to which the State will be prepared to grant financial assistance, if they are submitted in complete form to the Local Government Board before the 15th April, 1920, and carried out within a period of two years from the date of the Boards' sanction, or within such further period as may be approved by the Board, are :—

- (a) Schemes under Part III. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, for any area for which the Board are satisfied that it is desirable that houses for the working classes should be provided.
- (b) Re-housing schemes in connection with improvement and reconstruction schemes under Parts I. and II. of the Housing of the Working Classes Act, 1890, except that no part of the cost of acquiring and clearing a site would be made the subject of financial assistance if either (1) the site had been acquired or cleared before the date of this letter, or (2) the needs of the district could, in the opinion of the Board, be adequately met by means of a scheme under Part III.

3. The full cost of a scheme will, in the first instance, be met out of a loan or loans raised by the local authority and, while the Treasury are prepared to make loans from the Local Loans Fund where this is necessary, it is essential, having regard to the heavy claims on that Fund, that wherever possible, and in particular in the case of large authorities, loans should be raised by the authorities themselves in the open market. As the financial assistance to be granted from public funds for housing schemes will take the form of a subsidy, as explained below, and as it is important to secure that the whole of the State assistance may be given under one head, any loans granted from the Local Loans Fund for the purpose of assisted schemes will not be made at the preferential rates ordinarily allowed for housing loans, but at a rate fixed by the Treasury so as to correspond with the full current market rate of interest.

4. In respect of any approved housing scheme, or series of schemes, carried out by a local authority within the period mentioned, Parliament will be asked to vote financial assistance calculated on a basis estimated to relieve the local authority of any loss incurred within a maximum of one pound for one pound of the rent actually collected each year from the occupiers of

the houses, as certified by the Local Government Board Auditor. The amount of the subsidy will be reconsidered at the end of seven years, when it will be open to the Local Government Board to reduce it if they consider that there is evidence that the Local Authority has not exercised due economy in management and in not securing the best rents obtainable.

Pending the completion and letting of the houses, the subsidy from the State will be equal to the interest on the first and subsequent instalments of the Loan for a maximum period of one year from the signing of the contracts for the erection of the houses.

It must, however, be borne in mind that schemes subsidised in these ways will not be entitled to participate in the distribution of the Housing Fund provided by the Housing of the Working Classes (Ireland) Act, 1908.

5. The Local Government Board rely upon the local authorities to exercise the utmost economy in the making of contracts, the selection of land, and the cost of management, as if by reason of any failure to observe these conditions the cost of the houses involved a rent which, even with the subsidy, would place them beyond the rent-paying powers of the working classes for whom they are intended, and would result in their being occupied by more comfortably-circumstanced people, the Board would be obliged to consider the propriety of reducing the subsidy, or withdrawing it altogether.

6. The Board, with the approval of the Treasury, have requested the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland to conduct an architectural competition under conditions calculated to secure designs for suitable and economical types of houses grouped in the most advantageous manner on typical sites, and copies of the premiated designs will be available for the guidance of local authorities after the awards of the assessors have been made.

7. Legislation will shortly be introduced to give the necessary statutory powers to local authorities which may be required in regard to the provision of houses for the working classes, to enable local authorities under the Housing Acts to assist Public Utility Societies to provide houses for the very poor, to deal with bye-laws and local Act provisions which may be found to impede desirable housing proposals, and generally to facilitate the execution of schemes.

8. In view of the pressing urgency of the housing situation, the preparation of their schemes by the local authorities should not be postponed until the introduction of the proposed legislation. Having regard to the terms of the financial assistance

now offered, the arrangements which are being made for the provision of materials and the supply of labour which is becoming available owing to the cancellation of war contracts and the demobilisation of the Forces, there should be no reason for any delay. The Government are looking to the local authorities to start at once upon the housing schemes which are regarded as forming one of the most urgent and essential parts of the whole programme of reconstruction.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

A. R. BARLAS,

Secretary.

To

The Town Clerk of each County Borough.
The Clerk of each Urban District Council.
The Clerk to the Town Commissioners.

LOANS SANCTIONED FOR SCHEMES UNDER THE HOUSING ACTS,
AND UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH, &C., ACTS.

I. *Housing of the Working Classes Acts, 1890 to 1908.*

The cases are detailed below in which loans have been sanctioned during the year for the purposes of Part III of the Act of 1890.

In accordance with Section 5 of the Act of 1908 we ascertained and certified the amounts in respect of which certain Local Authorities were liable under the Section, and the following table shows the cases in which payments from the Irish Housing Fund have been made during the year. In each case mentioned the annual housing charge, as defined in the Section, was met to the extent of 12 per centum.

LOCAL AUTHORITY.	Amount of Grant.		
	£	s.	d.
Arklow Urban District Council	104	9	1
Armagh Urban District Council	3	10	10
Athlone Urban District Council	34	6	1
Athy Urban District Council	40	9	10
Ballina Urban District Council	49	15	9
Ballinasloe Urban District Council	46	1	4
Balbriggan Town Commissioners	2	13	4
Ballybay Town Commissioners	1	2	0
Ballymoney Urban District Council	16	4	5
Bandon Town Commissioners	30	1	5
Bantry Town Commissioners	7	16	5

LOCAL AUTHORITY.

Amount of
Grant.

£ s. d.

Belfast Corporation	...	...	914	14	5
Birr Urban District Council	...	...	36	4	1
Blackrock Urban District Council	...	...	239	16	4
Bray Urban District Council	...	...	61	11	9
Callan Town Commissioners	...	...	24	9	3
Carlow Urban District Council	...	...	86	11	2
Carrickmacross Urban District Council	...	...	35	1	4
Cashel Urban District Council	...	...	15	15	8
Castlebar Urban District Council	...	...	24	2	10
Cavan Urban District Council	...	...	21	0	10
Clonakilty Urban District Council	...	...	9	17	2
Clonmel Corporation	...	...	22	19	3
Coleraine Urban District Council	...	...	30	6	10
Cookstown Urban District Council	...	...	14	2	8
Cootehill Urban District Council	...	...	9	18	6
Dalkey Urban District Council	...	...	34	0	3
Drogheda Corporation	...	...	73	1	8
Dublin Corporation	...	...	1,238	0	5
Dundalk Urban District Council	...	...	172	9	3
Dungannon Urban District Council	...	...	29	12	1
Dungarvan Urban District Council	...	...	23	2	7
Ennis Urban District Council	...	...	148	18	10
Enniscorthy Urban District Council	...	...	50	12	4
Fermoy Urban District Council	...	...	97	15	8
Fethard Town Commissioners	...	...	6	6	2
Galway Urban District Council	...	...	148	2	3
Granard Urban District Council	...	...	25	9	4
Kells Urban District Council	...	...	10	18	2
Kilkenny Corporation	...	...	106	8	2
Killarney Urban District Council	...	...	35	0	4
Killiney and Ballybrack Urban District Council	...	...	24	19	1
Kingstown Urban District Council	...	...	166	0	3
Letterkenny Urban District Council	...	...	35	10	2
Limerick Corporation	...	...	117	7	10
Longford Urban District Council	...	...	48	0	7
Lurgan Urban District Council	...	...	68	2	5
Maryborough Town Commissioners	...	...	33	13	6
Midleton Urban District Council	...	...	17	13	8
Monaghan Urban District Council	...	...	29	1	6
Mountmellick Town Commissioners	...	...	27	9	6
Mullingar Town Commissioners	...	...	20	10	7
Naas Urban District Council	...	...	34	6	1
Navan Urban District Council	...	...	60	6	11
Nenagh Urban District Council	...	...	31	2	7
Newbridge Town Commissioners	...	...	3	7	0
Newcastle (Co. Limerick) Town Commissioners	...	...	20	5	2
New Ross Urban District Council	...	...	20	15	3

LOCAL AUTHORITY.		Amount of Grant.		
		£	s.	d.
Newry Urban District Council	...	84	9	7
Omagh Urban District Council	...	10	1	2
Pembroke Urban District Council	...	770	8	10
Portrush Urban District Council	...	22	11	6
Queenstown Urban District Council	...	97	13	2
Roscommon Town Commissioners	...	15	13	2
Skibbereen Urban District Council	...	19	11	2
Thurles Urban District Council	...	17	19	7
Tipperary Urban District Council	...	91	16	4
Trillick Urban District Council	...	59	4	4
Trim Urban District Council	...	19	13	7
Tuam Town Commissioners	...	34	5	6
Tullamore Urban District Council	...	41	1	6
Waterford Corporation	...	168	2	7
Westport Urban District Council	...	13	0	5
Wexford Corporation	...	75	7	8
Youghal Urban District Council	...	12	6	4

PART III.

During the year we sanctioned loans of £34,616 (supplemental) and £233,593 to the Corporation of Dublin, £1,272 10s. (supplemental) to the Ballina Urban District Council, £20,000 (supplemental) to the Pembroke Urban District Council, and £186 (supplemental) to the Balbriggan Town Commissioners. The amount of these loans, added to £1,638,950 mentioned in our last Report, makes a total of £1,928,617 10s. 0d. sanctioned for the purposes of this Part of the Act. Of this total £1,154,405 10s. 0d. has been sanctioned since the passing of the Act of 1908.

2. *The Small Dwellings Acquisition Act, 1899.*

During the year we sanctioned a loan of £5,800 to the Shillelagh Rural District Council for the purpose of making advances to occupiers of houses in the village of Carnew to enable them to acquire the ownership thereof.

3. *The Public Health (Ireland) Acts, 1878 to 1918, etc.*

Schemes for sewerage, water supply, and other local improvements are carried out by Sanitary Authorities in Urban, Rural and United Districts (Urban and Rural) chiefly by means of loans which we sanction in pursuance of Sections 237 and 247 of the Public Health (Ireland) Acts, 1878, and of local enactments. The loans sanctioned during the year for these purposes amounted to £207,016 10s. 0d.

Section 237 of the Act of 1878 applies to borrowing under headings 1 and 2, as well as to that under this head, and the loans under these three heads amounted to £502,484 which, added to similar loans previously sanctioned, gives a total of £12,310,398.

4. *Poor Relief (Ireland) Acts, and the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898, Section 61.*

We sanctioned loans amounting to £5,166 12s. 10d. for workhouse buildings and improvements, and the purchase of lands, on the application of the Board of Guardians of the Unions concerned.

5. *Local Government (Application of Enactments) Order, 1898. Article 22 of the Schedule thereto.*

Loans amounting to £16,582 under this Article have been sanctioned for the purpose of enabling County Councils and the Joint Committees of Lunatic Asylums to carry out works for county improvements, roads, etc., and for the erection of buildings, and other works at Asylums.

VII.—PAYMENTS FROM THE LOCAL TAXATION (IRELAND) ACCOUNT
IN AID OF LOCAL RATES.

1. *Grants under the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898.*

(a.) *In respect of Guardians' Medical and Educational expenditure and of Sanitary Salaries paid in Rural and Urban Districts.*

The following statements show the amounts paid under Section 58 (2) (a) (b) of the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1898 as amended by the Local Government (Ireland) Act, 1902, to county councils, on behalf of boards of guardians and rural district councils, and to urban district councils and the boards of management of Glin and Trim district schools during the year ended the 31st of March, 1919, and the preceding year.

Owing to the insufficiency of the amount paid under Section 58 to the Account during the year under review to meet the payments thereout in the same period Your Excellency deemed it necessary, in pursuance of Sub-section (5) of the Section, to make an Order directing proportionate abatement of the sums so payable having regard to the said insufficiency. These abatements amounted to £12,991 15s. 3d.

was formerly payable out of probate duties is now payable out of the estate duty derived from personal property, and is known as the Death Duty Grant.

It forms the first item of the cash portion of the Guarantee Fund established under the Purchase of Land (Ireland) Act, 1891, to meet deficiencies in the land purchase account in respect of dividends on land stock and sinking fund payments, and the sums required for such purposes, in the case of each county, are withdrawn from the Fund under certificates of the Land Commission. By the Irish Land Act, 1903, the Agricultural Grant is added to and made applicable to the purposes of the cash portion of the Guarantee Fund next after the Death Duty Grant and charges on the Fund resulting from operations under the Act of 1903 are likewise, in the case of each county, withdrawn under certificates of the Commissioners of National Debt; these certificates, and those above-mentioned, also setting forth repayments made to the Fund in respect of sums previously withdrawn. Under the Irish Land Act, 1909, however, local bodies are relieved of all liability in connection with the issue of stock for the purpose of land purchase, but they continue to be liable for purchasers' annuities in arrear, and for the sums drawn from Guarantee Fund under Section 29 of the Act of 1903.

For the purpose of adjusting these withdrawals and repayments in the case of each county, among the public bodies in the county who are entitled to share in the Death Duty Grant, viz., Boards of Guardians and Road Authorities, we are furnished with copies of the certificates referred to on the occasion of the distribution of the second instalment of the Grant, which is made in the month of March each year. On the recent occasion it appeared from the certificates that £189,508 9s. 1d. had been withdrawn from all the counties, and £150,149 17s. 11d. repaid; and as the withdrawals exceeded the repayments in every county the difference between these amounts, viz: £39,358 11s. 2d., was deducted from the shares of the local bodies in all the counties.

The total amounts paid during the year ended the 31st of March last were as follows:—

Boards of Guardians	...	...	£122,040	2	1½
Road Authorities	...	...	£124,804	17	1½
			<hr/>		
			£246,844	19	3

VIII.—AUDIT.

(a.) *Accounts Audited.*

The following statement shows the number of Public Bodies whose accounts are audited by our Auditors, from which it may

be seen that in the course of a year 1,432 accounts are required to be audited :—

Half-yearly Audits.

- 33 County Councils.
- 210 Rural District Councils.
- 154 Boards of Guardians.
- 23 Committees of Management of District Lunatic Asylums.
- 20 Drainage Boards or Committees.
- 2 Committees of Management of District Schools.
- 1 Joint Committee of Urban and Rural District Councils for the management of a cemetery and of sewerage and water supply.
- 8 County Committees of Agriculture and Technical Instruction.
- 25 County Joint Committees of Technical Instruction.
- 25 County Committees of Agriculture.
- 8 Hospital or Infirmary Boards.
- 6 Burial Boards or Cemetery Committees.
- 2 Joint Committees of County Councils for the construction of bridges.
- 27 Tuberculosis Committees.

544

Yearly Audits.

- 6 County Borough Councils.
- 5 Non-County Borough Councils.
- 89 Urban District Councils.
- 27 Governing Bodies of Towns other than Urban Districts.
- 138 Educational Endowment Accounts under the Endowment Schemes.
- 1 The Commissioners of Charitable Donations and Bequests.
- 3 Committees of Gasworks.
- 2 Waterworks Authorities.
- 4 Harbour Boards.
- 7 Port Sanitary Authorities.
- 6 Burial Boards or Cemetery Committees.
- 2 Drainage Boards.
- 13 Hospital or Infirmary Boards.
- 1 Board for cleansing of foreshore.
- 6 County Borough Committees of Technical Instruction.
- 30 Urban District Committees of Technical Instruction.
- 2 Joint Urban and Rural Committees of Technical Instruction.
- 2 Tuberculosis Committees.

344

(b.) Surcharges, Disallowances, etc.

During the year we decided appeals against 230 charges, disallowances, and surcharges.

Other surcharges were made in regard to which there were no appeals against the Auditors' decisions; in some cases the question of appeal did not arise, the various items of expenditure to which exception was taken, having been lodged before the completion of audit, thus obviating the necessity of formally disallowing them.

IX.—EXAMINATION OF PARLIAMENTARY BILLS.

The Irish local or personal Bills set forth below were introduced into Parliament during the Session of 1919. The Bills were referred to us for consideration and were examined in this Department, at their successive stages in each House. We did not find it necessary to make any reports thereon to Parliament.

The Royal Assent was received in each case except in that of the Cork Bill, where the parties decided not to proceed after the report of the Committee.

List of Bills.

Belfast Harbour Bill.

Cork Harbour Bill.

Dublin Port and Docks Bill.

Londonderry Port and Harbour Bill.

Waterford Harbour Bill.

[TABLE.

X.—DEPUTATIONS RECEIVED.

During the year under review we received deputations from the undermentioned local bodies, associations, etc., on subjects of public interest.

Date.	Local Body, etc.	Subject.
1918.		
16th April ...	North and South Dublin Boards of Guardians and Irish "Mothers' Pensions" Society.	Improvement of condition of Widows and Orphans in receipt of out-door relief in the Dublin Area.
17th May ...	Belfast Corporation: Committee of Management of Hospitals and Dispensaries.	Purchase of premises for a Tuberculosis Dispensary.
26th June ...	Irish Medical Association*	Salaries of Dispensary Medical Officers.
26th July ...	Tenants of Carnew Artisans' Dwellings ...	Purchase of dwellings.
26th August...	North Dublin Board of Guardians ...	Superannuation of Officers.
27th September	South Dublin Board of Guardians	Old Age Pensions.
1919.		
8th January	Corporation of Dublin	Re-building of destroyed Area.
15th January	Central Committee on Women's Employment for Leinster, Munster and Connaught.	Future position of Committee.
29th January	Ulster Town Clerks' Association ...	War Bonus.
6th February	Corporation of Belfast	Housing.
12th February	Ennis Urban District Council	(1) Loans. (2) Extension of Borough boundary. (3) Electric Lighting Scheme.
13th February	Corporation of Dublin	Public Libraries rate.
17th February	Peamount Sanatorium Committee ...	Financial position of the Institution.

XI.—DEPARTMENTAL ARRANGEMENTS.

We have to report with much regret the death of Mr. M. O'Sullivan, an Assistant Secretary to the Board, and of Sir J. Acheson MacCullagh, one of our Medical Inspectors, both of whom had rendered long and valuable service to the Department.

One of our Auditors, Mr. J. More O'Ferrall, resigned his appointment during the year under review, and vacancies in the Staff of Inspectors were filled by the appointment to the Establishment of Mr. Adrian Robinson, B.L., temporary Inspector, and Dr. A. D. Clinch, late of the Royal Army Medical Corps, as General and Medical Inspector, respectively.

We have the honour to be,
your Excellency's obedient Servants,

IAN MACPHERSON, *President.*

H. A. ROBINSON, *Vice-President.*

EDMUND BOURKE,
EDWARD F. STEPHENSON, } *Commissioners.*

